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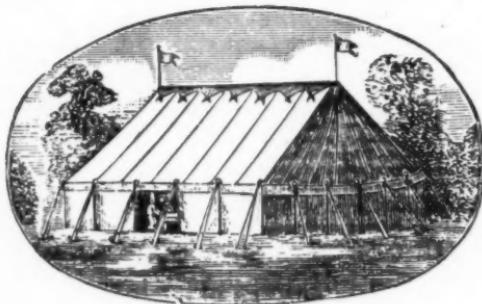
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*From a Photograph.*

ALEXANDER IRELAND.







## ALEXANDER IRELAND.

BY JOHN MORTIMER.

"A Man he seems of cheerful yesterdays  
And confident to-morrows ; with a face  
Not worldly-minded, for it bears too much  
Of Nature's impress, gaiety and health,  
Freedom and hope : but keen withal, and shrewd.  
His gestures note,—and hark ! his tone of voice  
Are all vivacious as his mien and looks."

—WORDSWORTH. *The Excursion.*

ON a dim December day, along with a crowd of mourners gathered together in a mortuary chapel, I took part in a funeral ceremony, and saw a flower-wreathed coffin pass slowly behind a dusky veil, and in that solemn disappearance it was borne in upon me, with an acute sense of personal loss, that in this wise all that was recognizably human of our dear old friend Alexander Ireland had vanished for ever from mortal sense and sight ; that familiar outward presentment of him to be no more known to me, save as

A handful of white dust, shut in an urn of brass.

Such an earthly leave-taking could not fail to be impressive in any case, but this was peculiarly so to those of us who recognised its deep suggestiveness, and the far-reaching associations with which it was indissolubly connected, for truly,

That is not a common chance  
That takes away a noble mind.

The death of our friend had been sudden and unexpected, the tidings of it having come through the evening

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journals of the day on which it occurred, and without any previous warning of its impending possibility. On the morning following, the outer world was made aware, through columns of newspaper type, what a notable and interesting figure had disappeared from our midst. Many, to whom the name of Alexander Ireland was a household word, already knew much that was thus recorded, but those who did not were put in possession of many biographical details, relating to his long and honourable life. They were told how, in 1843, he came hither from Edinburgh, where he was born and spent the years of his early manhood. He was a business man when he came to Manchester, but he was also a man of very refined tastes, with a predilection for literary pleasures and literary society, and this it was doubtless that led him to associate himself with journalism, and to become the managing partner of the newspaper known in the first instance as the *Manchester Examiner*, and subsequently, for a very long period, as the *Manchester Examiner and Times*. No more congenial environment could he have found, and so for the best part of half a century he was enabled to combine business with literary culture, and to form those remarkable friendships with distinguished men of letters, which he cherished as among the most precious acquisitions of his life.

It was especially true in our friend's case that the child was father of the man, for very early did he develop that love of literature which was ever for him the abiding and predominating passion, exceeding, as one imagines, but only just exceeding, an ardent and equally abiding affection for Nature. The choicest books, and the choicest among those who wrote or loved them, these were the companionships which he eagerly sought, and of which he never wearied. In his Edinburgh days he had formed many

such friendships of a personal kind. There is on record, from his own pen, a delightful account of that period, in which he discourses of his numerous friends, many of whom have since become notable in Literature or otherwise, and with whom he shared congenial joys in the society of Nature and of books. As we know, he was intimate with William and Robert Chambers, and was in the secret of the authorship of "The Vestiges of Creation," which the latter had written, and succeeded in publishing anonymously, receiving valuable aid in that direction from his journalistic friend in Manchester, whose delight it was in later years to tell the story of that mysterious procedure. It was in those early days, too, that he made his pilgrimage to Abbotsford, and had the inestimable delight of seeing, and speaking with, Sir Walter Scott.

Ah ! did you once see Shelley plain,  
And did he stop and speak to you ?  
And did you speak to him again ?  
How strange it seems and new !

Robert Browning's lines, addressed to his friend, appropriately recur to one in thinking over the long list of eminent names of men with whom Alexander Ireland had come in contact, or with whom he had intimate and friendly communication and correspondence. Among these names there stand out prominently those of Leigh Hunt, De Quincey, Wordsworth, Carlyle, Emerson, Campbell, Nathaniel Hawthorne, James Russell Lowell, George Dawson, and Oliver Wendell Holmes. Always a charming conversationalist, his talk was delightfully flavoured with anecdotes of his distinguished friends, and as one by one they were taken away by death he was able in many instances to give to the world his personal reminiscences. In this connection it is a noticeable fact that Oliver Wendell Holmes, the last survivor of the men of letters

already alluded to, died only two months before Alexander Ireland, and it is with a pathetic interest that the present writer, before setting down these words, has taken from an envelope, addressed with a tremulous hand, the last communication he received from our friend, and read over again his published references to the author of "The Autoocrat of the Breakfast Table," and the numerous extracts from letters which show how much of kindness, and even affection, existed in their correspondence with each other. This power of inducing sympathetic relationship with his friends was a marked feature in Alexander Ireland's character. Whether he conversed or corresponded with you the charm was there. That Leigh Hunt should have loved him is no marvel; but it must be set down as among things remarkable that he could secure the friendly and confidential esteem of the Sage of Chelsea. Emerson showed his wonderful insight into character when he conceived the existence of that pool of honey lying about the heart of our friend, to the truth of which many of us can personally testify. No one who came in contact with him but was impressed with the open ingenuousness of his nature, his homogeneity, so to speak, of sincerity and goodness.

In that "solid, dark, broad, rather heavy man; full of energy, broad sagacity, and practicability," as Carlyle described him, there was an infinite tenderness and delicacy of nature. I think of these and of other features in our friend's character, as exemplified towards one who seemed to have no claim to such regard, when I remember his kind words, written or spoken, or when I look upon his gifts—a print of Winterslow Hut, to remind me of his volume on Hazlitt and the place where that author wrote many of his essays; a copy of his "Book Lover's Enchiridion," to remind me of himself; or his "Life of Jane Welsh Carlyle," in memory of his wife.

In the Literary Club we knew him only to love and esteem him. For many years he was a member with us, and always bulked largely as a distinct personality whenever he appeared among us, impressing us with a sense of the presence of

A sweet nature gilded by the gracious gleam  
Of letters—

one whose soul had had its own fair seed-time, and who came to us "bringing his sheaves with him." Those were notable nights when he discoursed to us of Leigh Hunt, of Hazlitt, of Charles Lamb, of Carlyle, of Emerson, and of the poet Campbell. At such times he would bring with him not only his own memories, but treasures from his library, autograph letters, portraits, and memorabilia of various kinds.

When he dealt with a theme which he had made peculiarly his own, he did so in the spirit of an enthusiast, but it was an enthusiasm tempered with a fine common-sense. He never allowed his admiration to cloud his judgment. It is proverbially easier to pull down than to build up, but, like a true critic, he did not willingly set himself to the work of destruction merely, but rather that of rearing some abiding edifice of excellence from the worthiest materials he could find in an author. The best that has been thought or spoken in this world: these were the things he prized best and sought after most eagerly.

In thinking over the peculiar characteristics of our friend I have been strongly impressed with his resemblance to Henry Crabb Robinson. They both had the same tastes and dispositions, and both lived to be octogenarians, retaining the same freshness and juvenility of spirit and open-eyed wonderment and interest in the affairs of life to the last. They were both grey-headed boys whose hearts could not grow old. Crabb Robinson

was an omnivorous and voracious reader—a devourer of books. “He read before he got up and after he went to bed. On his journeys, whether on foot or on a stage coach, he was in the habit of reading. The most attractive scenery had to share his attention with a book.” We all know how widely and persistently Alexander Ireland read. Among his most noteworthy communications to the club was one regarding the best books for general readers, and that long list, with its wise comments, remains as a monument to our departed friend’s wide catholicity of taste and selection in literature. We know too that up to the latest hours of his long life he was a continuous and unwearied reader, works of imagination not having even then lost their charm for him.

When, a few weeks before Crabb Robinson’s death, Mr. Macmillan, the publisher, asked him why he had never been induced to undertake some great literary work, he replied, “It is because I am a wise man. I early found that I had not the literary ability to give me such a place among English authors as I should have desired; but I thought that I had an opportunity of gaining a knowledge of many of the most distinguished men of the age, and that I might do good by keeping a record of my interviews with them.” In like manner, we know that though Alexander Ireland possessed a large knowledge of men and books, and though it was the delight of his life to be in touch with the finest minds of his time, he mainly confined himself, in literary expression, to anecdotal, critical, biographical, and bibliographical references to his favourite authors, or the equally congenial task of drawing attention to their choicest sayings. To edit, in his own journal, a column of select thoughts of the best thinkers; to give us “Recollections of Ralph Waldo Emerson,” “A Bibliographical list of the writings of Charles Lamb, and of the voluminous

works of William Hazlitt and Leigh Hunt;" to search the treasure-house of his own library, and produce therefrom pearls of thought in a "Book-lover's Enchiridion"; and, as his latest effort in book work, to make selections from the works of William Hazlitt and prefix thereto a discriminative memoir of that essayist and critic; these were the literary labours he delighted in and mark his limitations as an author. Many scattered reminiscences there are in newspapers, and doubtless many more that remain unpublished, and it is a matter for regret that he never completed that volume of them upon which we have reason to know he was at work in his last days.

Much might be said, did space permit, of the many excellences that went to make up one of the most loving and lovable of men. One thinks of his high-mindedness, his scorn of untruth, his wholesome and delightful optimism, the entire absence of any morbid strain in his nature, and that large-heartedness which led him to bestow his affection upon men of opposite literary temperaments, and who were not always in harmony with each other. In this regard one remembers, with some amusement, how troubled he would be in soul when one of his heroes spoke disparagingly of another, at whose shrine our friend was an equally devout worshipper. The essayists were to him the favourite children of literature, and among them he had given his heart to Charles Lamb. For Carlyle too, as we know, he had the most reverential and devoted regard. It came to him, therefore, as a shocking revelation, when, after the death of the great philosopher, it was found that he had written words of the supremest scorn and contempt for the gentle Elia. Our friend felt that this was a matter which called for serious investigation, and it will be in the recollection of

members of the Literary Club, how, in a paper he read before them, he strove, with almost painful earnestness, to show by carefully prepared evidence, that if the great Thomas had sinned, he had committed his offence in ignorance. Of Alexander Ireland it might truthfully be said that he loved the society of his fellow men. To the end he was a willing and welcome guest in any social gathering where kindred spirits were to be found. There was ever about him a refined courtesy, and his conversation was always charming, with gleams in it of the literary light of other days, as when he would incidentally refer to an interview with Wordsworth at Rydal, or a morning with De Quincey at Lasswade. It seems but yesterday, indeed it was when he had just reached his last birthday, that I heard him recite to a company of friends two of Wordsworth's sonnets relating to the blessed fellowship of books, and which might be said to embody the literary creed of our friend. I seem to hear now the tone of his voice, as with a sort of measured chant he repeated those lines which once before he had recited on a memorable occasion in this club when we were met to do him honour :—

Wings have we,—and as far as we can go  
 We may find pleasure ; wilderness and wood  
 Blank ocean and mere sky support that mood,  
 With which the lofty sanctifies the low.  
 Dreams, books, are each a world, and books, we know,  
 Are a substantial world, both pure and good ;  
 Round these with tendrils strong as flesh and blood  
 Our pastime and our happiness will grow.  
 There find I personal themes and precious store ;  
 Matter wherein right voluble I am ;  
 To which I listen with a ready ear ;  
 Two shall be named, pre-eminently dear—  
 The gentle lady married to the Moor,  
 And heavenly Una with her milk-white Lamb.

Nor can I not believe but that hereby  
 Great gains are mine ; for thus I live remote  
 From evil-speaking ; rancour, never sought,  
 Comes to me not ; malignant truth, or lie.

Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I  
 Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and joyous thought.  
 And thus from day to day my little Boat  
 Rocks in its harbour, lodging peaceably.  
 Blessings be with them, and eternal praise,  
 Who gave us nobler lives and nobler cares—  
 The poets who on earth have made us heirs  
 Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays !  
 O might my name be numbered among theirs,  
 Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

I remember, too, how he then expressed his keen interest in all the affairs of life, telling us of his daily reading, not only of books, but newspapers, so as to keep himself abreast with the thought and movement of the time. The evening of his days seemed to be filled with a calm tranquillity, and it may be that when he contemplated the taking leave of life he would have in his mind those lines which Mrs. Barbauld wrote in extreme old age, and which Wordsworth loved so well :

Life, we've been long together,  
 Through pleasant and through cloudy weather :  
 'Tis hard to part, when friends are dear,  
 Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear ;  
 Then steal away, give little warning,  
 Choose thine own time ;  
 Say not good night, but in some brighter clime,  
 Bid me good morning.

And so it was with our friend, to whom the call came suddenly, and when his last night here had come to an end, he passed into

A clearer day  
 Than our poor twilight dawn on earth.

And so tranquil does the end of his life seem to have been that there is not one of us who will not join in the hope that when the time comes for us to fade away, like him, into the unknown,

Our close of earth's experience  
 May prove as peaceful as his own.

\*



## IN THE COUNTRY OF THEOCRITUS.

BY C. E. TYRER.

*Syracuse.*

THERE is already a touch of spring in the air on this January day; though it may seem perhaps a little ridiculous to talk of spring when we have had practically no winter. This shrunken little city of Syracuse—now strictly confined to the pear-shaped island of Ortygia, where Dorian colonists from Corinth planted their original settlement more than 2,600 years ago—has, on the whole, a very modern aspect; though it tries to retain something of an antique air by giving to its narrow streets and alleys and tiny squares such names as Via Diana, Piazza Timoleonte, and Ronco Simonide. Some columns of a supposed Temple of Minerva, which, with the architrave and frieze of the entablature, project from the exterior wall of the Cathedral; the scanty ruins of another partially excavated temple; the beautiful façade of a (so-called) Gothic palazzo; and the castello or fort at the extreme point of the island, which was erected by the Byzantine George Maniaces when he wrested Syracuse

from the Saracens at the beginning of the eleventh century—these are about all modern Syracuse has to show in the way of classical or mediæval remains. It is, on the whole, a clean little town, and has even so far advanced in civilisation as to have its streets illuminated by the electric light; and it has one charming promenade, looking across the Great Harbour to the softly swelling hills beyond, where the little world of Syracuse collects on Sunday afternoons to listen to the music of the municipal band. Nor, among the features of Syracuse, should one omit to speak of the Fountain of Arethusa, which bubbles up hard by the sea in a basin surrounded by papyrus plants, with their graceful plumes, and recalls the myth of the maiden pursued under sea from Greece by the river-god Alpheus—a myth which has been beautifully retold in lyric verse by our own Shelley.

The sun is hot this morning, and the sky ablaze with light and blue; and from the dusky and tortuous alleys of the dwindled city it is pleasant to emerge into freedom and sunshine at the bridges which connect Syracuse with the mainland of Sicily, and bathe in the full radiance and splendour of this southern atmosphere. How beautiful is the heaven of Syracuse—so lofty, so steeped in light, and with such a glowing horizon as we never see in our northern clime! Perhaps the loveliness of sky and sea are even more striking here, where the features of the landscape are all on a small scale, than amid the sublimer scenes of the north-east coast of the island. As I cross the bridges I meet the carts of the peasants coming in with their produce from the country; gaily-painted carts, ornamented with pictures where scenes from the lives of the saints, from mediæval legends, and from popular operas jostle one another oddly enough. Just beyond there is a large circular space of meadow, and near its

centre one mutilated column of veined marble and the bases of several others, the sole remains of what was once the Agora of the famous Hellenic city. From near this point three roads diverge. That to the right—the road to Catania—leads to the finely-preserved Greek theatre and the Roman amphitheatre, to the Necropolis and Street of Tombs, as well as to the principal Latomie (the ancient quarries of the city) and the Catacombs. The road to the extreme left follows the curve of the Great Harbour, and leads one to the Anapo, sung by Theocritus, and to the brook Cyane, overgrown by the feathery papyrus plant, and the only place in Europe (says Gregorovius) where it is to be found in a wild state, it having now disappeared from its old habitat on the banks of the Oreto, near Palermo. Just above these, on gently-rising ground, are two solitary and imperfect columns, which once belonged to a great temple of the Olympian Zeus, a spot celebrated likewise in the Athenian and other campaigns against Syracuse; for, as it directly commanded the city across the Great Harbour, its besiegers generally sought to secure it as a point of vantage. The third and central road leads westward underneath the limestone plateau which was once occupied by the extended city, and whose surface gradually rises towards the west, culminating in the fort which crowns the Epipolæ, and which may be considered as the apex of the great triangular plateau. It was pleasant, on this bright morning, to step westward along this road, which, after leaving behind it the ugliness and squalor which almost invariably mark the first stages of a high road out of an Italian town, had many agreeable sights to offer. Here, yoked to a plough not unlike the Virgilian "aratum" of the First Georgic, save that the share was of steel instead of wood, were a couple of stately oxen, with coats of a bright ruddy-brown, as they invariably

are in Sicily, where the milk-white oxen of Tuscany are unknown. Then the thin, reed-like notes of some birds unseen came floating out from among the olive trees. In respect to the voices of birds, Italy is a very silent land—one main cause being that the youths of a place take their guns out into the country on Sundays and festas and shoot all the small birds, that being their noble idea of sport. Here, again, is a goatherd leaning on his staff and watching his shaggy flock. With his knee-breeches and drooping Phrygian cap, he is not unpicturesque ; but I do not suppose he ever heard of a poet called Theocritus, once famous in these parts, who roamed the country-side and mingled with shepherds and goatherds at their sports and contests, echoes of which still survive in the immortal idylls. He never heard of a goatherd, the sweetness of whose piping was as “the melodious whisper of the pine by the fountain-side,” and who challenged Thrysis, the shepherd of Etna, to a memorable contest of song. No, our poor *contadino* knows not the syrinx : he has never heard the voice of great Pan “down in the reeds by the river,” the music of Nature has never passed into his being and moved him to imitation. But if our modern Sicilian goatherd may seem to have little in common with him whose melody still lives in the beautiful idyll of Theocritus, here are the very flowers which the poet looked upon, as lovely as they were in those far Hellenic days, when the world, to our much-travelled thoughts, was so young and so fair. Here, beside the road, are many tall spikes of asphodel, the classical asphodel, with its sword-shaped leaves, thick flower-stalks, and dense panicles of white star-shaped flowers, with a delicate line of pink along the centre of each petal, and among them the beautiful deep-blue flowers of a low-growing iris. Then, amid the vivid green of a young field of corn hard by, the purple anemone

is already opening its beautiful cups. Many and brilliant are the floral gifts which the advancing months bring to us in England and in Italy ; but none perhaps touch the chords of feeling within so deeply and yet so delicately as the first snowdrop and the first anemone. By this time the road has begun to ascend, and looking backwards I have a lovely view over a vast stretch of undulating country towards the sea, dotted here and there with hamlet or homestead, and, beyond, the white houses of Syracuse on its slender point of land glittering like jewels in the sun, and set in the unbroken azure of the Ionian Sea. The trees hereabouts, and as far as the eye can distinguish, are mainly olives, a tree which, individually of admirable picturesqueness, is not very satisfactory *en masse* ; but the monotonous olive grey is broken occasionally by the deep full green of the carob tree or the dark slender spires of a little group of cypresses. Taking a wretched path to the right of the main road, a path which a short time ago must have been a veritable Slough of Despond, I presently arrived at Belvedere, a village perched on the highest ground in the neighbourhood of Syracuse, but which in its name commemorates its solitary feature with which it would be possible to connect the idea of beauty. It is, indeed, the meanest and filthiest of villages, consisting of several rows of hovels planted irregularly along the uneven surface of the hill, and with no attempt at any road beyond the natural soil and rock. I ate my lunch at a wretched hovel, combining the functions of inn and general store, and whose single apartment evidently served as the eating and sleeping place of the whole family, while their creature belongings roamed at their will over every part of it. The cabins in which the poorest classes of the Sicilians mostly live are still only one remove from the caverns in the rocks which presumably sheltered the

original inhabitants of the island, and correspond pretty accurately to Goethe's description of the cottages he saw near Naples in 1787: "one-storeyed, without windows, the rooms only lighted by the door opening on the street. From early day till nightfall the inhabitants sit outside, only at the last moment creeping back into their dens." But the Sicilian peasant, even the poorest, has generally the instinct of friendliness and courtesy, and the good woman bestirred herself to boil me some eggs, using fresh olive-boughs as fuel. Then she set before me some of the amber-hued wine of Syracuse, not "honey-sweet," like the wine of the Homeric heroes, and yet "sweet to the mind" (*μελίφρων*) as was that which Alcinous set before his guest in the isle of the Phaeacians,\* a generous, glowing, and glow-irradiating liquor, not unlike a natural sherry.

Unfortunately by this time the sky had become overcast; and, as I traversed the road to Fort Euryelus, clouds had gathered over Etna, whose majestic snows, glittering in the sun, impart at this season an element of sublimity to every prospect of which they form a part. To the left stretched a long ridge of grey-blue mountain, now known as Monte Crimiti, which has been identified by modern critics with the Thymbris, whose "beautiful water" Theocritus celebrates in his first idyll, and which supplied one of the aqueducts of the ancient city; and in front was the peninsula of Thapsus and all that tract of country between the sea and the plateau which was the scene of the earlier portion of the Athenian siege. The Fort of Euryelus, which marks, as I have said, the most westerly point of the Epipolæ, the most westerly and highest quarter of ancient Syracuse, is at present a labyrinth of ruinous towers, fosses, and subterranean galleries, not easily

\* Odysey, VII., 182.

explorable or readily intelligible without the aid of a good cicerone. At this point converged the northern and southern portions of that famous wall with which Dionysius encircled the city when, after the disastrous overthrow of the Athenians, it had attained its greatest extent and splendour. Huge isolated blocks of this wall are still to be seen lying on the edge of the plateau as one follows it eastward towards the sea, with here and there an ancient gnarled olive rooted among them, the fittest associate of the scene. This vast undulating plateau, everywhere strewn with stones, and with the porous limestone rock emerging constantly from the soil, is very sad and silent now, and it is hard to believe that it was once covered with houses and public buildings, and formed the larger part of a city whose population was at any rate not inferior to that of modern Manchester. Occasionally one comes across a little goatherd wrapped in a huge scarlet muffler to protect him against the chill air of the now clouded afternoon; or one sees a meagre field of wheat, scantily clothing with green a patch of stony ground. But, save the fragments of the wall and the underground remains of the aqueducts which supplied the city, not a vestige remains here of the past greatness of Syracuse. Out of the barren soil which once bore the city of empire great violet anemones are just now bursting into bloom—a touching witness and symbol of the undying vitality and loveliness of Nature amid all the changes and chances of the human lot:—

Loveliness, magic, and grace,  
They are here, they are set in the world,  
They abide.—  
The poet who sings them may die,  
But they are immortal and live,  
For they are the life of the world.



## CONCERNING SLOW MUSIC.

BY EDMUND MERCER.

I was once dissipated enough to riot away twopence in witnessing in a "gaff," a superior kind, with real footlights, orchestra, and stage boxes—the latter suspiciously redolent of herrings and oranges—a farce, melodrama and pantomime, all in a single quarter of an hour. Things went on well, I suppose, for I altogether failed to discover what the farce was about, until the melodrama was in progress. The orchestra—a bald-headed man, wearing an under-sized moth-eaten wig of a sage-green tint—was a new one, and naturally played with becoming vigour upon various instruments of wonderful construction and resonant power. Overcome by the terrible emotions excited by the melodrama, which, by the way, was a very much expurgated arrangement of the "Miller and his Men," he coughed into his battered cornet and kicked the big drum with uncommon energy. He was totally oblivious to everything until startled by the appearance of the Miller standing astride the footlights, holding in his hand a naked sword with which he was making ferocious but ineffectual prods at the labouring musician, accompanied with a

sonorous injunction to "stop that blarsted moosic;" whereupon the strains and straining suddenly ceased by the *multum in parvo* orchestra disappearing incontinently into the sawdust of the stalls amid the ironic yells of their aristocratic occupants. I cannot hand that miller's name down to posterity, because I don't know it; and, moreover, I have only a moderate reach. But it was worth preservation, as he was one of the first actors (?) to trample upon a stage tradition that is only a nuisance. Melodrama, according to recipe, must be accompanied by music, at any rate, instrumental exertion by the orchestra. This is an essential. If it is absent the piece is not melodrama, it is something else—a farce, comedy, tragedy, or even a comic opera—but not melodrama. How is it possible for the first gentleman and the leading lady in the first act to part for ever, and express the poetic emotion of their harrowed souls, without the skreeling of fiddle-strings? How can an intelligent audience appreciate the pathos of this valedictory scene and sympathise with the lady's sobs and the throat-throbs of her lover, unless they be assisted with *pianissimo* violin variations on "The Girl I Left Behind Me," and interpolatory sighs from the 'cello? If the stage time be evening, these sinuous wailings of cat-gut are more suggestive of a Bartholomew *Anglicus* cat *in extremis*, which "createth at night a fearful and ghastful row."

Neither can a shipwreck be satisfactorily accomplished without the aid of the orchestra. While the actors on the stage are flinging about lifebelts, spars, hencoops, and other bits of scenery, and everybody is making frantic efforts to save everybody else, vicious as well as virtuous, in order that the plot shall wend its destined course, the actors in front of the footlights are also alive to the situation, the conductor excepted. He just drops his baton, and

instrumental chaos begins. There is no longer any thought of time or tune; here, too, it is a case of *sauve-qui-peut*. The drummer bangs the belly of his instrument as though he were making a horseshoe against time; the flautist lets loose ear-splitting shrieks; the trombonist grows asthmatic with blowing out scales; and the rest of the piping crew have a kind of go-as-you-please contest, until the conductor has been satisfied that every one has escaped, and then—tap, tap, and away they all go with a grand outburst of “The Bay of Biscay!” Hurrah! all’s well! On with the next scene!

There are two historical fires that burned to music. One required an orchestra of cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, *et cetera*; the other was the sizzling of Rome to the fiddle-sawing of Nero. These traditions are kept alive by the stage fires of to-day. The property fire-engine, after the frivolous Japanese manner, must be accompanied by a band. No well-regulated histrionic conflagration would condescend to blaze decently unless so assisted. It is well known in halls of variety that Mademoiselle Blanc-Mange cannot foot the slack wire feately except to a given absurd ditty. In a similar way it probably requires sounds of horror from the throat of a clarionet to stimulate the Guy Fawkes, who manipulates the red fire, to his duty. I happened to be present once when the roof of a property barn, intended for a grand holocaust, slipped bodily from its moorings and temporarily laid out half the orchestra. In consequence that fire was a frost. On another occasion I suppose the gunpowder man had too much stimulant, orchestral and other, for his fireworks got beyond his control, and needed prompt suppression by a real fireman, who very properly spread his water-spray over the stage, and, as a precautionary measure, over the musicians.

Earthquakes have also tender feelings and require considerable pampering. Orpheus, we know, could charm rocks and stones, but it takes a not altogether incompetent band to tame a stage earthquake. A properly trained earthquake is really rather startling, even when you are used to it. But it is very bad form for an earthquake, after it is supposed to have accomplished its task of spontaneous, thunderous ruin, to have to be hauled about the stage and sectionally deposited in sundry places to fit the exigencies of its bad behaviour, and enable it to fulfil its destiny. Probably the "excursions and alarms" did not follow precedent; and as every self-respecting earthquake has a passion for thorough-bass blasts, it may be presumed that it will not put up with ill-assorted samples from a bombardon. Hence these little eccentricities.

After passing through one or more of these varied scenes of upset, the hero generally returns disguised in riches. The stage directions are:—"Night. Cottage O.P. with practicable door. Light seen through the diamond casement. Full moon. Snow on the ground." Enter hero: "Once more, after many weary years, are my feet upon my native cobblestones." And then we hear sounds like a breeze blowing through jews-harps and combs in tissue paper, and from the middle of the pit a childish voice pipes out, "Mother, is he going to dance?" and in the laughter that ensues exit pathos. All these things pertain to melodrama.

Rising a little higher to plays of greater merit in construction, requiring more artistic presentation, such as may fairly be called melodramatic drama, or drama flavoured with melodrama, the same principles obtain with certainly less energy, though quite as much obtrusion. In "Charles I." that unfortunate monarch has the additional unhappiness of being haunted by a plaintive

old French melody, which must surely have grown to be as distasteful to him as his great enemy Oliver. I don't wonder at his meeting death with such equanimity. Then in the robbery of "The Lyons Mail" by Dubosc and gang, the orchestra should most assuredly be indicted as accessory before, at, and after the fact, if, indeed, it be not guilty as principal, by inciting the mind of the great robber to naughty deeds and general bedevilment. Matthias, in "The Bells," requires the aid of a mysterious air to his great undoing, and "The Corsican Brothers" may be anybody, unaccompanied by the ghost melody. The hero of such plays as these must now-a-days always be heralded by a *leit motif*; otherwise, to that great section of playgoers who have been wrongly educated to expect a certain amount of orchestral caterwauling, *agitato*, *allegro*, *appassionata*, and likewise *ad libitum*, at critical moments in the dramatic action, he is as unrecognisable as "Lohengrin" minus the "Swan-song" to even a rampant Wagnerian. The "Ballad-monger," as played by Mr. Beerbohm Tree and his company, is one of the most complete, interesting, and quietly delightful little plays, and the "Devout Lover," sung by Lois at the opening of the play, a beautiful, tender song, and a charmingly happy and appropriate text to the exposition that follows; in which opinion I am obstinate. Yet I must confess to an annoyance at the persistent drawling—neither more nor less—of this pretty song by the orchestra during a greater part of the play. I don't see any reason for this—the drawling, I mean; because if the song is not impressive enough in its proper place—and it should be, quite—the conductor might make a little symphony of it, to be played before the curtain rises, to bring the audience to a proper frame of mind, instead of reeling out some fatuous waltz. Apart from the spoiling of good music and interfering with a good

play, incidental music raises other controversial questions. In the land of Good Manners, which high society is gradually invading with dire result, it is considered bad form to talk while music is being executed; therefore should actors not be allowed to forget their pretty manners, but give the orchestra a chance of being heard. On the other hand, in the same country, Paderewski himself would misbehave did he obtrusively finger the piano during the course of an interesting lecture. If, therefore, the actors are to speak, we would suggest the temporary snuffing out of the band, so that from pit to gallery even quiet unrestrained tones might be distinctly and uninterruptedly audible. In this last-mentioned play I would rather hear the voices of Mr. Tree and Miss Lily Hanbury than the fiddling of a whole band of Sarasates, on their favourite Strads, too, much as I might—perhaps!—enjoy so unique an experience at a fitting time. Acoustics also gives us a little matter for cogitation on this point. It is a fact, too well known to need argument, that musical sounds penetrate further than others. A properly produced note is audible at a greater distance than a shout, and with less effort. How greatly, then, are actors handicapped in their vocal expression if they must accomplish this satisfactorily through an intervening screen of musical sounds; the orchestra being between them and us, and the sounds it makes more readily heard than theirs! That "incidental" orchestration can be abolished for a time, and with effect, we need only remember the second act of "A Scrap of Paper," where Mrs. Kendal, alone on the scene, with only a dozen lines to say, can keep a whole house thoroughly interested for at least five minutes, while she searches for the compromising scrap, in a most helpful silence on the part of the usually irrepressible band.

Conversation is often stimulated by music; and bad music, like bad liquor, hath a stronger operation in this respect. But whatever might be the effect of liquor—being innocent of undue experiment therewith I am in doubt—I cannot truthfully say that music, especially of inferior workmanship, would improve the quality of my conversation, though I am told that the meretricious kind increases the output. I rather fancy, if *my* daily life were infected in this manner, that my language, even if I were an actor, would verge—if not actually trespass—on profanity.





## WINCKELMANN AND THE ART OF ANCIENT GREECE.

BY JOHN WALKER.

### I.

JOHANN JOACHIM WINCKELMANN is one of the most luminous figures of the eighteenth century. He was born in the year 1717, in the dreary little town of Stendal, in Brandenburg, and his infancy was full of those miseries incident to talent when it finds itself fettered by poverty. Some strange and inexplicable cause seems to have directed his thoughts to the acquirement of classic learning even when, as a dirty urchin, he assisted his father in repairing shoes. There is nothing in his pedigree, however, to suggest a hereditary source for his genius and inclinations. The lad's insatiable hunger for learning at length attracted the notice of the good Rector Tappert, who, struck with Winckelmann's invincible determination and thirst for knowledge, obtained him admission to the Latin school of the Grey Friars. There he had access to a Dutch edition of the classics, and his progress now became most rapid, the lad displaying a vast capacity for know-

ledge and extraordinary diligence. By and by the pastor made him his "famulus" or amanuensis, and took him into his house, giving him a room and a bed.

The change from the miserable hovel which his father occupied was not without its due effect upon Winckelmann. Thus early his tastes seem finally and irreversibly to have declared themselves. He began to read with an object, and to the consternation of his relatives and the dismay of the rector he neglected the Holy Fathers for Herodotus and Homer. The vowelled language of Athens became a passion—the strongest and most absorbing passion of his life. Like Racine, he did not escape punishment for this irreverential preference, but his masters failed to attain the desired result.

When his schoolmates purchased sweetmeats this strange boy was hoarding his pennies in order to buy those books which were absent from the shelves of the school library. His lonely rambles in the sandy wastes of the Old Mark were made lovely with bright imaginings. The solitude became peopled with gods and heroes and fair shapes of the old time. A strange and wistful sense of something lost, ere long to be regained, rather than an ambitious desire to make new discoveries, would ever seem to have informed his thoughts. Child as he was, his irrepressible genius impelled him to dig for ancient urns in the friable soil of the Brandenburg dunes, thus directing him towards the antique world over which he was destined to shed an imperishable lustre. Dwelling always in the region of ideals, the glorious past soon came to seem more distinct and more real than the present.

At Stendal he was hemmed in everywhere save on the side of the imagination, and Rector Tappert, recognising that a change would do Winckelmann much good, sent him to the Kölische Stift at Berlin. Here, in this

Gymnasium, he made secure the foundations of his Hellenistic learning. It was, perhaps, fortunate for him that at this time his mind still refused to be led in the direction of Latin and theology, or otherwise he might have remained a dominie or a weak-kneed divine all the days of his life. He made friends at this place who encouraged him in his Greek studies, to the disgust of the Rector Bake; who, when Winckelmann left the school in 1736, ironically qualified him in his certificate as "*homo vagus et inconstans*."

It was to Salzwedel that the youth proceeded on leaving Berlin, where he found the masters disgustingly pedantic and blind to the unconquerable forces which were impelling Winckelmann to prosecute his studies of the ancients. Yet, despite a meagre library and an atmosphere in the highest degree inimical to his advancement, he bravely struggled on; and many of his doings at this period mark the buoyancy of his character and the indestructibility of his hopes. Among these we notice a journey that he made to Hamburg in order that he might handle some valuable editions of the classics before their dispersion—a pilgrimage made on foot, and at much inconvenience. The same secret magnetism which drew him to that city urged him also to make a similar pilgrimage to Dresden to inspect the fine art treasures there.

In 1737 he returned to Stendal, and subsequently went to the university of Halle, entering the Faculty of Theology in order that he might obtain a scanty stipend and the free board granted only to students of divinity. When Goethe described Winckelmann as a born heathen he was not very far wide of the mark, for never did there exist a nature more opposed by all its instincts to Christian asceticism than that of him who was one day to lay the foundation of the worship of classicism. For a time he

attended the uninteresting lectures, but he soon left off and applied himself still more strenuously to the classics. The study of Hebrew afforded him relaxation when he grew tired of his translation of Herodotus. Philology and archaeology also occupied him in the university libraries, where he ever worked with that wonderful, dogged persistency which was one of his most admirable characteristics. Yet here Winckelmann, the votary of the gravest of intellectual traditions, could get nothing from the professional guardians of learning but cool neglect, and even had to witness an attempt at suppression.

Before leaving Halle he acquired a sound knowledge of bibliography by cataloguing the Chancellor's library. The clever and precise way in which he did his work procured for him a situation as tutor at Osterburg Castle.

A year in this refined home, under the genial influence of its accomplished chatelaine, was a pleasant change from the severities of his student life. From here he went to the University of Jena, with the intention of studying medicine. He was not long at Jena before his poverty-stricken condition compelled him to set out on foot for Berlin, ostensibly to seek suitable employment. Before he had even reached Frankfort he had to turn back, finding himself without a stiver. He appears to have returned to Halle, where almost immediately he heard that a tutor was wanted by one Lamprecht at Hadmersleben. For this post he at once applied and was successful, remaining at Hadmersleben sufficiently long to form a romantic friendship with his pupil, young Lamprecht, and to study the works of Bayle, an author whose influence is distinctly perceptible in all Winckelmann's writings.

Thence he went to Seehausen, where he had obtained the post of conrector. Here, in this dreary place, under the pedantic rector, Paalzow, Winckelmann rusted in

monotony and wretchedness, leading the life of a slave. Being discovered in reading Homer in church, his position was made more and more oppressive. His duties were increased, and he was condemned to an endless routine of rudimentary instruction. This left him no time for his favourite pursuits, which became, therefore, all the more vitally necessary to him.

At this juncture the iron resolution of the man appears in the most dramatic light. Seeing the necessity of escaping from this insufferable bondage, he began to take only half the usual quantity of food in order that he might the sooner save enough money to justify his quitting the place. His biographers have drawn for us painful pictures of Winckelmann's self-denial at this time. During one whole winter he never went to bed, but nightly slept for four hours only. They have described him as he sat in his narrow monastic cell, poring over some little parchment volume of Plutarch or Sophocles at four o'clock in the terrible small hours of a northern winter. There, with but a sheepskin for his covering and a little lamp for light and warmth, he was wont to sit and dream of the sunny Ionian sea and the pine-clad hills of the Mediterranean in the midst of a wild white wilderness of snow, over which the bellowing blast blew keen from the frigid east, shaking the worm-eaten frames of his dim lattice window, as the moon slowly sank behind the round massive towers of St. Peter and St. Paul.

By the practice of such extraordinary asceticism Winckelmann became the great Hellenist whom we know. He was the first, after Scaliger, to view with an inward eye the ideas and truths of which he found the record in Greek authors. It now became a habit with him to seize upon facts instead of abstractions—to view the world with his own eyes, and to free himself from the suffocating atmosphere of books about books.

At Seehausen, too, he made a step forward in culture by renouncing all those interests not directly bearing upon the object of his life. He gave up mathematics and law, devoting himself exclusively to the literature of the arts. He thus multiplied his intellectual forces by allowing nothing to enter his life that was not suffused with the glow of his soul's desire.

His servitude at Seehausen was of five years' duration, during a great portion of which he lived on bread, cheese, and water. Whilst inculcating the mysteries of the alphabet into the muddy brains of stupid children his longing to attain to the knowledge of beauty helped to stimulate and support him. Day by day, as he performed his thankless tasks, this deep and passionate desire was strenuously working in his heart, and the splendid similes of Homer were humming in his brain. During this time of penance he did not forget to be filial, and his slender purse was placed at the disposition of his parents year by year.

Some friendships that he formed helped to alleviate his miseries, and at last, when he was on a visit to his native place in the beginning of 1748, an avenue of comparative freedom opened up before him. He heard of a vacancy in the library of Count Bünau at Nöthenitz, near Dresden. Bünau was devoted to the collection of historical documents, and usually kept several assistants. Winckelmann, fired with hope, wrote to the Count a most pathetic letter, couched in somewhat unacademic French, setting forth his trials, his struggles, and his aspirations, and praying to be engaged in the historian's library in no matter what capacity. In this letter there is no note of selfish ambition: it is the heart-felt outpouring of one who feels that he has been sent into the world on no ordinary mission, and that he has a great message to deliver. Happily this epistle was

not without due effect; and, by engaging him, Count Bünau delivered Winckelmann from the Egypt in which he so long had been held in bondage.

Here, secure in the consciousness of the friendly respect entertained for him by the Count, his leisure moments were often occupied with the study of English and Italian writers. Butler, Pope, Addison, Shakespeare, and Milton were read; he was also in close communion with the spirits of Shaftesbury and Montaigne; thereby gaining that clear, open perception which distinguishes him from the other *savants* of his day. Then, too, he made periodical visits to the collection of antiques at Dresden, at that time the centre of artistic life in Germany. Hitherto he had been in contact with Greek life only as it is represented in books, "stirred, even inflamed, by them, yet divining beyond their words an unexpressed pulsation of sensuous life." At Dresden he beholds that life still fervent in the relics of plastic art; and we may imagine his transports of joy when he came at last face to face with the realisation of his splendid dreams, when he first handled those Grecian marbles and other relics of bygone civilizations, the very touch of which communicated to him inexplicable strength, awaking him to realities of the ancient world, theretofore but dimly apprehended.

Winckelmann had not been long at Nöthenitz before he perceived that, although his post was secure and a desirable one, it offered but little opportunity of advancement in the direction to which his ambition pointed. Rome had always attracted him, and when the Papal Nuncio, Archinto, made overtures to him in 1752, he accepted the ecclesiastic's proposals, and, after much uneasiness and hesitation, consented to join the Catholic Church, as such a change was one of the conditions of the Nuncio's offer.

Now that his hair was turning grey, consequent upon the privations and severe studies of his youth, he very properly felt that his first and holiest duty was to realise his destiny, and to develop his genius ere it became too late. His health, as well as his spirit, demanded a change; and, as almost every road to favour and distinction was open only through the medium of dignitaries of the Church, Winckelmann embraced this opportunity with the mingled feelings inevitable to such a critical step. His decision was not hastily taken, for he did not cast the dust of Protestantism off his feet until the 11th of July, 1754. Great efforts of sophistry were needed in order to enable him to deceive himself and his friends with regard to the real state of his feelings. Even when he was received into the Papal Communion, his apostacy continued to give him much concern, but his conscience was eased by the ever-recurring recollection that Rome and her treasures were open to him in no other way. Perhaps he also reflected that while Rome had reconciled itself to the Renaissance, the Protestant principle in art had cut off Germany from the tradition of beauty. Beyond these feelings he may also have been moved by some dim sense of the splendour and majesty, the antique—the almost cosmic—strength which has always characterised the Catholic religion. Yet, remembering the trials through which the neophyte had had to pass, and although we may agree that, judging by results, the means justified the end, we cannot but feel that at this crisis Winckelmann's whole behaviour lacks dignity. His special virtue is veracity. His transparent nature had the simplicity of the earlier world; and, therefore, the loss of absolute sincerity must have been acutely felt. Mr. Pater says that at the bar of the highest criticism he is more than absolved; and that his insincerity was only one incident of a culture in

which the moral instinct is lost in the artistic. Winckelmann was somewhat of a hedonist, and probably held that the aim of culture should be to attain not only as intense, but as complete, a life as possible.

In October, 1754, he left Nöthenitz, and went to Dresden to prepare himself for his new duties, and to complete and publish his book, "Thoughts on the Imitation of Greek Works." The famous Sistine Madonna had just arrived in the Saxon capital, and for a time Winckelmann was much occupied in studying the beauties of Raphael. In this labour of love he was aided by Frederic Oeser, an artist of high culture, who afterwards became Goethe's friend and master. This man exercised a most important influence upon Winckelmann's life, and indeed it may be said that he owes the substance of his first work, or at least its transition from nebulosity to concrete firmness, to Oeser's suggestions; even as Lessing owes the inspiration which led to the production of his immortal "Laokoon" to Winckelmann's "Thoughts."

This book, which is an appeal from the artificial classicism of the day to the study of the antique, attracted the notice of the Saxon king, and Winckelmann's reputation was made.

He now set his face towards the South, starting for Rome on the 24th of September, 1755, accompanied by a young Jesuit. Still thrilling with the recollection of the exquisitely wild beauty of the Tyrol, he reached the Eternal City in November, at once entering into a simple Bohemian life.

In fancy we can see him in the balcony of his lodgings, arm in arm with his artist friend Mengs, gazing at the suggestive panorama of roofs spread out below. We can see him in the German *caffè* drinking his glass of good Orvieto after a morning's study with the young painters in

the Campodoglio, the wine wetting his *roquelaire* as his hand shakes with the merriment which so often possessed him. Moving about among the antiquities of the city, he would often exclaim, "I have come into the world and Italy too late." For a while he was dazed by the evidences of past civilisations, which everywhere met his eyes. Like Dante, passing from the darkness of the Inferno, he was filled with a sharp and joyful sense of light. The repression under which he had so long existed was removed at last and his spirit rose to the intellectual light of Hellenism as the dew rises to the sun at dawn. Rome became a passion with him; the subtle influences of the city absorbed him. Shady laurel-woods full of the melody of nightingales; alleys of high dark cypresses over which the white moon hung in the pearly sky of evening; the rose-walks shimmering with dew in the first blushes of morning; orangeries perfuming the mid-day air in gardens such as those of the Villa Ludovici, the Villa Borghese, and the Villa Medici, gave him that natural consolation so necessary to the proper development of the artistic temperament.

In the shrubberies of the Villa Ludovici Winckelmann had the unspeakable felicity of discovering the celebrated colossal Juno, which is now the principal ornament of the gardens of that palace. In the grounds of these several villas he often walked with the painter Mengs, who found in this earnest antiquarian the sympathetic friend he needed, and in return for his sympathy the erudite artist became Winckelmann's teacher in a far higher degree than Oeser, helping him with his thorough knowledge of technique and his fine feeling for the antique. One was the complement of the other, and the relation of these two men from first to last almost realises those old classical ideas of friendship of

which Winckelmann was so enamoured. It seems tolerably clear that the suggestion of his greatest work, "The History of Ancient Art," was the outcome of this association, for he had the happy faculty of both making friends and making use of them.

Fully a year had elapsed before the ecclesiastics evinced any desire to approach Winckelmann in order to redeem the pledges made to him by their representative in Saxony. At last, however, he was introduced to Cardinal Passionei, who made him free of his books and helped him in other ways. Eventually he was appointed librarian to Cardinal Archinto, who now acted as Secretary of State. This new post necessitated a residence at the Cancellaria Palace, where he assumed a priest's dress and the title of "abbate." Then followed a visit to the excavations at Herculaneum, where he laboured for some time under such a sky as had canopied the Grecian scenes which had so long blest his dreams. Upon his return to Rome he proceeded to Florence, to examine and to catalogue that unique collection of *intagli* now in the famous gallery of the Uffizi.

The loveliness of Florence was a continual wonder to Winckelmann. His ten months' stay in that city was a perpetual feast of pleasure. Here, in ancient Tuscany, he saw and studied the great works of Raphael and Michael Angelo, with conflicting and confused feelings as to their merits and relation to classic art. Though he admired the purity of form and the vigour of Raphael, he perhaps somewhat unjustly declared of Michael Angelo that he had laid the foundations and constructed the bridges leading to vicious taste in sculpture—fancying that he could detect an Etruscan spirit in his works and in those of Donatello.

When he again returned to Rome, Archinto had died, and therefore a further search for a patron became neces-

sary: and now his former benefactor Giacomelli again came to his aid, and recommended him to the eminent virtuoso Cardinal Albani, who at once became his patron. Not only an art lover, but also an artist, Albani was peculiarly able to appreciate Winckelmann. Patron and *protégé* became as brothers, and more than brothers, and thus it was that the halcyon days of Winckelmann's life were so happily inaugurated.

At the Villa Albani he remained for some eight years—the last, the serenest years of his life—in which the sense of insecurity and dependence which so galled the noble Dante at Verona was fortunately absent. Too long had

. . . . . the bread he had to eat  
Seemed brackish.

Now he was esteemed and treated as an equal by a friend and not a master.

During these tranquil days he once more met Madame Mengs, and with her husband's full consent, entered into a strange relationship with that fascinating Italian; Mengs being at that time absent in Spain. This was the first real love affair of Winckelmann's life, and the most extraordinary one imaginable, the two lovers entering into a written compact concerning an exalted species of friendship, "hitherto perhaps unknown," by which they agreed to respect certain limits, in spite of Mengs' authorisation, who wished his wife to continue writing love-letters to Winckelmann after she had rejoined him. Having knowledge of this peculiar connection, we are not surprised to find Winckelmann writing, about this time, "vixit annos septem," as the sum total of the story of his life.

From the Villa Albani, at different periods, the following works were issued:—"Die Erklärung schwerer Punkte in der Mythologie und in den Alterthümerin," the "Send-

schreiben von den Herculanschen Entdeckungen," the "Nachrichten von den neuesten Herculanschen Entdeckungen," and finally, his *chef d'œuvre*, the immortal "History of Ancient Art." This memorable production made an era in literature, and its success was most important and complete. After a reception such as might have tempted most authors to rest on their laurels, he continued systematically adding to and improving his work under the deepening sympathy of Albani.

After publishing a further work: "Der Versuch einer Allegorie besonders für die Kunst," he became seized with an intense longing to visit his old friends in Germany, where Goethe and many others awaited his coming in a fever of expectancy and delight. He departed from Rome on the 10th of April, 1768, in the company of the distinguished sculptor Cavaceppi, to use his own words, simply intoxicated with joy at the prospect before him.

Yet he had hardly put his foot on German ground before he was unaccountably seized with *Heimweh*. Italy was now his home—his soul being there. The North repelled him. His nostalgia became so unbearable that he proposed to return to Rome. Eventually, however, Cavaceppi prevailed upon him to proceed as far as Vienna, where the two separated. The warm reception accorded to Winckelmann at the Austrian capital, by the Queen Maria Theresa and others, had no power to change his plans. He felt the necessity of an immediate—a precipitate flight. He therefore hurried on to Trieste, where, from an uncertain cause, he was delayed some days, during which time he made the acquaintance of one Francesco Arcangeli, who, from a cook had degenerated into a rogue and a vagabond. Winckelmann appears to have treated this man with much confidence, speaking of his intentions and showing him several medals and gold coins. On the

night that the vessel was to sail, Arcangeli entered his room, under the pretext of taking leave. The fellow asked to be allowed to examine the coins and medals, and whilst Winckelmann was stooping to reach them from his travelling chest, Arcangeli threw a noose over him. A wild struggle ensued, during which Winckelmann was stabbed five times in the breast and stomach. Shortly afterwards a child, whose friendship he had made to beguile the delay, knocked at the door, and receiving no answer, gave an alarm.

The murderer had fled, but was soon captured, and he expiated his crime by being broken on the wheel in July, 1768. After six hours torment, Winckelmann expired, subsequent to his receiving the sacraments of the Romish Church, and to his having given a full explanation of the circumstances of his murder. His was a death such as the gods of Greece gave to those who were devoted to them—an end swift and sudden, which cut him off in the pride of his life. The people of Trieste, singularly blind to his rank and merits, threw the body into a pauper's grave. But he needed no splendid obsequies, for he was then already indisputably great, and his place was fixed in the hearts of most men of culture. "He has," says Goethe, "the advantage of figuring in the memory of posterity as one eternally bold and strong, for the image in which one leaves the world is that in which one moves among the shadows."

Although it was not ordained that Goethe should clasp his hand and come under the spell of his personal magnetism, Winckelmann became to the poet something like what Virgil was to Dante. But by this tragedy German literary history seems to have lost the chance of one of those renowned associations, the very thought of which becomes an incentive to high endeavour.

## II.

Winckelmann's influence upon his contemporaries, the study of his character and of his special technical attributes present a most inviting field. The consideration of his superb gift of analysis would in itself form a subject impossible to be compressed within the limits of an ordinary article. His elasticity, his wholeness, and his intellectual integrity not only left a profound trace upon the character of Goethe, but also suffused German literature with the abiding glow which now lights it. German prose, indeed, dates from the publication of Winckelmann's "Thoughts," in which the Sistine Madonna and the Laokoon are depicted in a style and language hitherto unknown.

Winckelmann always had a wish to see the whole of the various manifestations of Greek art amalgamated under one pervading idea. That thought occurs often in his works, and is more and more urgently expressed in his later than in his earlier ones. It may be summed up thus: "The highest beauty is in God, and our conception of human loveliness becomes more and more perfect as it is realised in harmony with the highest existence that is conceived by us as that unity and individuality which we distinguish from matter. This idea of beauty is like an essence extracted from matter by great heat; it seems to beget unto itself a creature formed after the likeness of the first rational creature formed in the mind of the Divinity. The shapes of such a figure are simple and flowing and various in their unity; and for this reason they are harmonious, precisely as a sweet and pleasing tone can be extracted from bodies whose parts are uniform. All beauty is heightened by unity and simplicity, as in everything that we say or do. Simplicity is the very soul of art, for whatever is great in itself is still farther elevated when executed or uttered with simplicity."

Winckelmann holds that "the art of antiquity, to be rightly understood, must be grasped in its entirety, in its essential aim, as the necessary expression, the loftiest representation of the human spirit, embodied in the highest and most beautiful of earthly forms. Every individual work of art must be seen to be, as it were, but a limb or function of this extended range of artistic possibility and endeavour, and be estimated only in this sense." In other words, he sought in the soul for the grand motive that vitalises Greek art, and in Nature, developed and undeveloped, for proofs and tests of the beauty of form.

It is characteristic of his minute observations that we should find him writing whole chapters in the spirit of this sentence: "The forms of a beautiful body are determined by lines the centre of which is constantly changing, and which if continued would never describe circles. They are consequently at once more simple and more complex than a circle, which, however large or small, has always the same centre, and either includes others or is included in others."

A thorough knowledge of Winckelmann's genius may be gained by the study of his "History of Ancient Art" and his preface to the *Monumenti*. Herein he tabulates works and distinguishes epochs in art in a manner before unknown. Establishing enthusiasm as the true starting-point of the historian, he develops the two great fundamental ideas which he had already evolved in his "Thoughts"—Ideality and Placid Grandeur.

As we have already seen, under the first of these two ideas, works of art are but a reflection of the Divine, and should represent "general ideas and things not of the senses." In other words, art was to produce mere abstractions, and every trace of individuality had to be abolished

from them as though it were inimical to their beauty. Living in an age of dramatic sculpture, he was the first to raise his voice against all endeavours to give permanence to elusive emotion of the soul, and the materialisation of feelings or thoughts; but he went still further when he asserted that ideality of form consists in generality of type. This he calls "indetermination," *i.e.* a thing whose shape is described by such lines and points as alone constitute beauty. It is true, he adds, that beauty ought to be put "into a state of action and passion." Yet this action and this passion, which he also calls expression, must be of a kind which does not change the general typical character of beauty; for the idea of elevated beauty can be engendered only by silent abstract contemplation of the individual; and it is *la placidezza senza alterezza e perturbazione* which the ancients lent their deities. Thus we see that the idea of "placid grandeur" connects itself with the same order of ideas as the generality, simplicity, and unity which played so prominent a part in Winckelmann's doctrine, according to which "the truly beautiful is one and never can be multiple."

There is something to be said in favour of Winckelmann's theory, for, if we take a work of Greek art, such as the *Venus di Milo*, we find in it no symbolical significance or suggestion of anything beyond its own triumphant beauty. The mind begins and ends with the finite image, yet loses no part of the spiritual motive. That motive is not lightly and loosely attached to the sensuous form, as the meaning to the allegory; but saturates and is identical with it. Nevertheless, Winckelmann's argumentation of this vague principle is likewise unsatisfactorily vague; for no one can be less deft than he when he arrives in the regions of philosophy. He saw this abstract beauty in outline alone, which is, in itself, an abstraction without

any reality. "Speaking of the drawing of the Greeks," he says, "is equivalent to treating of beauty in all its parts." Mankind, nevertheless, could not attain this standard of beauty all at once, but always has had to proceed to it by slow degrees. Hence the different periods in art; "the beautiful" coming after "the ancient" and "the grand style," and being only the latest fruit of a mature experience. Of course, this theory is not defensible at all points; such abstract idealism is unfitted to account for or to inspire true art; and indeed Winckelmann himself was far too great an artist at heart to remain long satisfied with this empty vagueness. Moreover, he was too sincere not to learn, and too frank not to own that he did learn. Whenever he could contrive to forget this chilly philosophy, which was quite unsuited to him, he invariably hit the right point. The ideal beauty which he maintained never, or at least no longer, existed, was immediately recognised by him whenever he met with it; and he even owned to having seen "living Niobes and Apollos from the Vatican" at several places in Italy, "who bore a perfect resemblance to the heads of the sublimest type of beauty." Greek forms he also saw at Naples.

He finishes, moreover, by indirectly admitting that, with all his definitions, he defined very little, indeed; that beauty is one of "Nature's great mysteries," that it is superior to our intelligence, and that it is necessary to be endowed with the gift of sight he himself possessed in so eminent a degree in order to see it at all.

The modern spirit cannot be satisfied with such concessions as Winckelmann makes when he admits that the ideal type really existed and still continues to exist in Southern Europe. His argument is untenable even when thus reduced, because it rests upon form and accident instead of upon substance. Still to any one reading

between the lines, his views have never anywhere the presumption of finality.

The secret of consummate artistic beauty is not to be found in the purely hypothetical perfection of the Greeks, but in their whole turn of mind. It was not that famous "Greek liberty which alone could make art prosper," as all the arts have likewise flourished in despotically governed states. The true cause of the superiority of the Greeks lay in their enjoyment of the highest intellectual culture united to an almost primitive simplicity of life. Modern existence is altogether too artificial; our clothes, recreations, dwellings and education are also artificial. We no longer derive our elementary notions from the living communications of teachers, but from books. In other words, with us abstraction precedes intuition, and we are, therefore, no longer childlike, innocent, and natural; for the mind dominates the body. By the coincidence of high culture and primitive simplicity alone is true art produced. This in itself accounts for the superiority of the Greece of Plato and Praxiteles, nor must we seek for its source either in a highly problematical political freedom, or in the beauty of the Greek type, which to this day has survived the complete decay of art in Greece as in Italy.

The merits of the History remain no less incontestable; not only because the work is replete with observation and admirable definitions, such as that of Portrait Painting and that of The Graceful; not only because it introduced the historical principle into the study of art, but because it establishes the different periods in art so thoroughly, that to this day we implicitly accept Winckelmann's definitions of them.

In considering the history as a whole, we find it has lost so little in the course of time that it may still serve us as a sure foundation for all works upon Hellenic beauty.

And we must remember that since Winckelmann's time many of the most significant examples of ancient statuary have been submitted to criticism. He had seen little or nothing of what we ascribe to the age of Phidias, and his conception of Greek art tends rather to put the mere elegance of imperial society in place of the severe and chastened grace of the *palæstra*. For the most part, he had to penetrate to Greek art through copies, imitations, and later Roman work itself; therefore, it is not surprising that this turbid medium has left in his actual results much that a more privileged criticism can correct. The merit of his history in our eyes is certainly considerably increased by the recollection that the Hercules of the Vatican, the friezes of the Parthenon, the Sleeping Faun, and the *Æginetan* sculptures were all unknown to him.

The artistic aspirations of the Greeks undoubtedly assumed their highest concrete shape in sculpture. Although limited to pure form, this art gives more than it loses by the limitation. In sculpture one sees the human being in an attitude of immutability—in the placidity of unchangeable attributes. Let me ask you to hew from the earth a plinth of marble, and endeavour to leave the impress of your individuality upon it. Remember, as you fashion it into fair outlines, that it is not the special situation, but the type—the *general* character of the subject to be delineated—that is all-important. You must also remember that, although in poetry and painting the situation predominates over the character, in sculpture the character predominates over the situation. Owing to the limitations of the material form of sculpture, you have to choose from a select number of types, each intrinsically interesting. These types are thus interesting because their immobile beauty is not dependent upon any special situation or effect. They are interesting independently of any dramatic attitude into which they may be thrown.

If you succeed in presenting one of these types in its essential lines, and perfect unity of parts, you will have penetrated to the secret of the power of sculpture.

Not by an accumulation of detail can this be done, however; on the other hand, simplicity of execution must be rigidly observed. There must be no straining after extraneous effects; no hint of the banalities of life; nothing that reminds the observer of what is trivial, low, and mean; and there must be no suggestion of conventionality. All such distractions must be carefully eliminated, and your whole effort must be towards producing a presentment of one of the highest types of humanity. By thus rejecting the distracting influences, you will produce a work of art that is informed with the Hellenic *Heiterkeit* and universality. The result of your labours will be a creation whose reposeful features are ignorant of every trace of action and consuming desires; a form bearing not only the impress of your own soul, but also some hint of man's connection with the greatest of all sculptors—the Omnipresent Deity.

In the figure which you have carved, the restlessness of humanity will be contrasted with the serenity of Divinity, and you will be able to form some estimate of the possibilities of man's nature. You will perceive an object entirely independent of the accidents of human life; an object which excites wonder, pleasure, and, perhaps, a little awe; a material shape in which the inherent Godhead is revealed. You will have succeeded in giving life to a block of stone; an unsentient, but nevertheless, real life; an individuality virile though immobile—full of the happy repose, the universal breadth and strength which are the supreme characteristics of the Hellenic ideal.

You cannot attain this generality, this breadth, this beautiful and divine repose, by careless observation, by

narrow and unstudious reflections, or by weak and hesitant execution. Men practising art with such methods have sometimes called for recognition on the plea of being "broad or general." But Hellenic breadth, placidity, and universality spring from the most painstaking labour, the most determined health and strength, from the most beautiful optimism, from the most chastened and vital morality, and from a culture at once simple, severe, analytical, and profound. It is culture such as this, with its increasing forces, its clarified thoughts, and its marvellous concentration that produces in sculpture certain suggestive types which have eternal life in the mind of man.

Sculpture deals more exclusively than any other art and ought in its higher manifestations to deal only with animal form. Its effect, of course, is greatest when confined to the nude. There is nothing in the world more beautiful than the naked human figure in a high state of perfection ; there is nothing in the world more wonderful, and it is in itself one entire medium of spiritual speech.

The law of repression (to which we have alluded) in every direction keeps passion always below that degree of intensity at which it is necessarily transitory ; never causing the features to assume the appearance of rage, of love, of surprise, or fear. The imitation of classical plastic art is thus severely limited, and, endless as are the attitudes of Greek sculpture, exquisite as is the invention of that nation in this direction, the actions and situations it permits are simple and few. Above all, the Hellenic ideal has nothing in common with the grotesque and but little with the allegorical, and it allows human emotion to beat gently upon the surface of the individual form, which loses by it nothing of its deep central placidity, its perfect beauty of proportion, or its universal breadth and repose.

Thus reduced to small proportions, the foregoing may be taken to be a brief exposition of Winckelmann's ideas in regard to sculpture.

We have already considered the question of the applicability of such rules to modern times. Ours is not an age of repose; modern culture has developed a strange and false delicacy which shrinks from the nude, and, indeed, from much that is virile, primeval, and strong.

The art of the Greeks was not an indelicate or an immoral art. In their eyes there was nothing indecorous in the exhibition of the body within due limits of decency. There is much more indecency in a modern ballet or pantomime than there was in the Olympian games; and even when Phryne rose from the water in sight of assembled Greece, beautiful and glowing and absolutely naked, there was reverence, not lewdness, in the gaze of the multitude. Recognising that there is nothing in the human form of which man need be ashamed, the Hellenes devoted themselves to its development. Winckelmann says that: "By no people has beauty been so highly esteemed as by the Greeks. The priests of a youthful Jupiter at Ægæ, of the Ismenian Apollo, and the priest, who at Tanagra led the procession of Mercury, bearing a lamb upon his shoulders, were always youths to whom the prize of beauty had been accorded. In an ancient song, ascribed to Simonides or Epicharmus, of four wishes, the first was health, the second was beauty. Monuments have been erected in certain towns in honour of the distinguished beauty of strangers. And as beauty was so longed for and prized by the Greeks, every beautiful person sought to become known to the people by this distinction, and above all, to approve himself to the artists, because *they* awarded the prize; and this desire was for the artists an opportunity of having supreme

beauty ever before their eyes. Beauty even gave a right to fame; and we find in Greek histories the most beautiful people distinguished. Some were famous for the beauty of one single part of their form, as Demetrius Phalereus, for his beautiful eyebrows, was called *αριτοβλέφαρος*. It seem to have been thought that the procreation of beautiful children might be promoted by prizes; this is shown by the existence of contests for beauty, which in ancient times were established by Cypselus, King of Arcadia, by the river Alpheus; and at the feast of Apollo of Philæ a prize was offered to the youths for the deftest kiss. This was decided by an umpire; as also at Megara, by the grave of Diocles. At Sparta and at Lesbos, in the temple of Juno, and among the Parrhasii, there were contests for beauty among women. The general esteem for beauty went so far, that the Spartan women set up in their bedchambers, a Nireus, a Narcissus, or a Hyacinth, that they might bear beautiful children."

This masterly piece of divinatory erudition displays to us the pure and healthy temperament of the antique world. To the old parable of the talents we are too apt to apply a mental rather than a physical significance. But his physical no less than his mental defections are inevitably brought home to man. To the Greeks it became apparent that being endowed with the treasure of a beautiful form, they must keep it in a high state of perfection, in order to gain favour with the gods, and out of that feeling sprang the glorious sculpture which still remains at once our delight and envy. For we cannot but envy that ancient people a civilisation which made Athens not only more beautiful, but wiser, healthier, and happier than our great London of to-day.

The Greek spirit still lives, though it be in its grave. The beauty of the palaestra and the beauty of the artist's

studio shall yet once more react on each other. Even now, at this early stage of the renascence of athletics, the playfields of Britain could furnish our artists with forms which would compare favourably with the Apollo Belvidere.

Gymnastic, which with the Greeks, originated as part of a healthy and intelligent religious ritual, has taken its proper place in these latter days, and coming generations shall once more recommend themselves to the gods by becoming swift and sinewy, and fair and flushed like them. And the flaccid degenerate youth of modern Athens, perfumed with bergamot, and anointed with bear's grease in lieu of the honest Attic oil of their ancestors, may yet strive to rival the old gods, and their increased beauty may pass back into them.

The civilisation which produced the following exquisite lines has surely a great future before it :—

White through the azure,  
 The purple blueness,  
 Of Nemi's waters  
 The swimmer goeth.  
 Ivory-white, or wan white as roses  
 Yellowed and tanned by the suns of the Orient,  
 His strong limbs sever the violet hollows ;  
 A shimmer of white fantastic motions  
 Waivering deep through the lake as he swimmeth.  
 Like gorse in the sunlight the gold of his yellow hair,  
 Yellow with sunshine and bright as with dewdrops,  
 Spray of the waters flung back as he tosseth  
 His head i' the sunlight in the midst of his laughter :  
 Red o'er his body, blossom-white 'mid the blueness,  
 And trailing behind him in glory of scarlet,  
 A branch of the red-berried ash of the mountains.

There is equal beauty in this picture, which also illustrates the Greek feeling :—

Out from the gloom  
Of the mountain valley,  
Where cliffs of basalt  
Make noontide twilight,  
And where the grey bat  
Swingeth his heavy wings,  
And echo reverberates  
The screams of the falcons :  
Where naught else soundeth  
Save the surge or the moaning  
Of mountain-winds,  
Or the long crash and rattle  
Of falling stones  
Spurned by the hill fox,  
Seeking his hollow lair ;  
Out from the gorge  
Into the sunlight,  
To the glowing world,  
To the flowers and the birds  
And the west wind laden  
With the breaths of rosemary, basil, and thyme —  
Comes the white rider,  
The naked youth,  
Glowing like ivory  
In the yellow sunshine.  
Beautiful, beautiful this youth of the mountain,  
Laughing low as he rideth  
Forth to the sunlight,  
The scarlet poppies agleam in his tresses  
Dark as the thick-cluster'd grapes of the ivy ;  
While over the foam  
Of the sea of narcissi,  
And high through the surf  
Of the asphodels,  
Trampleth and snorteth  
From his blood-red nostrils,  
The cream-white stallion.

In these extracts from Sharpe's poems there is a true and charming note of modernity, and we find a similar sentiment expressed in much of our contemporary literature. Here we have some faint suggestion of a hedonism

which seeks only to establish the right to enjoy the natural prerogatives of man. To take delight in beauty, to make every moment full and round and overflowing with the poetry of existence, that is the true doctrine. Such, it appears to me, was the end towards which Winckelmann was ever striving; for he considered beauty and strength to be the source of all religious feeling; and although we cannot attribute to him the renaissance of physical activity which has now come upon us, we must surely recognise that his work was one of the connecting links in the mental process which has wrought the reformation.

Art has real life. It is vital in proportion to its influence. Edison has gone so far as to say that every atom of which the earth is composed has intelligence. The consciousness which possesses animal forms is the only life which we are able intelligently to apprehend. But there is a life in inorganic and so-called inanimate substances, whose effects we can perceive, but whose functions we are unable to understand. Electricity is one evidence of the vitality of matter; but science may yet have other and still more wonderful disclosures to make to us.

Every atom of which a statue is composed is in constant motion. Had we eyes sufficiently strong we might see the molecules moving in the mass. So that it is surely not too much to suppose that, beyond the mere mental or æsthetic pleasure afforded by the contemplation of a beautiful statue, there is also a subtle influence communicable by touch. At any rate it would appear that after Winckelmann had first handled Greek marbles at Dresden he became possessed with a fully expanded power hitherto dormant in him.

Though far off in time, and most remote in situation, Winckelmann thenceforward felt the blood of ancient Greece thrill the languid currents of his veins. There-

after he vividly realised the life of that glorious epoch almost as if he had been the confidant of Plato, or the boon companion of Sophocles. The moment he begins to handle the remains of Hellenic plastic art, this divinatory power assumes a triumphant aspect. He is at once strangely familiar with all the phases and the meanings of the Greek cult. From the slender basis of a few facts which he has been able to glean from musty books, he is now permitted to divine the temperament of the antique world, and in this divination there is possibly more of recollection than of assumption. The touch of those cold marbles, buried a long age in the silent earth, supplies him with the suggestion of something which he had ever been unconsciously seeking; the hint once given, his life is ever afterwards passed in shedding stronger and still stronger light on those perceptions which in their utmost nebulosity thrilled him during the solitary wanderings of his boyhood on the Brandenburg dunes.

That the Hellenic tradition is able to satisfy some vital requirement of our nature is evidenced by the testimony which Winckelmann contributes as an isolated man of genius, and also by the general history of culture. Hellenism is no empty word, no mere element in our mental activity; it is a conscious tradition of our intellectual existence. Lying at the root of our philosophy, our art, our poetry, and even of our language, Hellenism ever and anon springs into lusty activity like the eruption of a volcano.

And this is as it should be. For the nearer we attain to the naïveté, the strength, the beauty, the health, and the general tone of that joyous existence which characterised ancient Greece, the better will it be for us, not only in our art, but also in the domestic phases of our lives.

Such an expression of opinion is consonant with a sincere admiration for modern art. Yet the progressive age in which we live has still much to learn from the art of past civilisations. Our architecture often offends the eye, our clothing is generally hideous, the smoky atmosphere of our large towns is a disgrace to civilisation; many of our indoor recreations are inimical to health, and our neglect of ventilation is absolutely amazing. These form only a trifling part of the disadvantages under which we moderns labour, and which make our age compare unfavourably with the highest period of Greek culture. Sooner or later we shall attain to a more healthy, to a more ideal existence, and the contemplation of ancient art will be no inconsiderable force in the introduction of this amelioration of life.\*



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\* The author desires to acknowledge his indebtedness to several authorities whom he has consulted, notably Hillebrand, Pater and Japp.



## JOHN VAREY'S CASH-BOOK.

BY JOHN MORTIMER.

ALL that I know of John Varey I have gleaned from his cash-book, which has been placed in my hands by Mr. Charles Roeder, a gentleman who, though of foreign birth, displays an amount of interest in local lore—literary, social, and antiquarian—which should put to shame some of us upon whom such matters have naturally more immediate and legitimate claims. The manuscript of which I have thus obtained temporary possession is a faded-looking little volume in grey boards, which contains the personal accounts of its author duly recorded within columns ruled by himself on the blank pages, and representing a period extending from March 4, 1780, to January 2, 1786. The volume is evidently an odd one, belonging probably to a series, for it begins with a balance brought forward from an earlier book, and ends with a note of a similar transfer to a new one. Regarding John Varey's book-keeping, it may be said that he had a style of his own; the transactions, whether debit or credit, follow each other consecutively, in a descriptive form, on the left-hand page, the amounts being separated into receipts and payments, and duly arranged in the parallel columns on the opposite page, where there is

ample space for marginal notes. John Varey's handwriting is marked by neatness, combined with a playful disposition to indulge occasionally in graceful little curves among the capital letters, but the effect of the whole is grave and sedate. His spelling is not always correct, but with a tendency to increased correctness as he proceeds with his journal. He sometimes indulges in variations of the same word, and it may be noted that he frequently spells the word "fent" thus, "ffent." To help him to a better knowledge of the language he is using we find that he possessed himself of an English Grammar, for which he tells us he paid Mr. Harrop one shilling and sixpence. Probably this Mr. Harrop was the well-known stationer of Market Place, Manchester.

In an ordinary way account books, especially of the mercantile sort, are not the kind of volumes from which we expect to extract much that is of literary or biographical interest. They are the despised and disregarded among books, not to be looked for upon stalls, or, if found there, and a man should turn the leaf, it will be but to close it again. John Varey's cash-book, however, is an exception in this regard. Being of a personal nature, the entries relate to the daily life of the chronicler, and possessing, as they do in this case, a peculiar quaintness, a precise fidelity, and even fulness, of statement, and by virtue, moreover, of a certain illuminating quality of the narrative kind, which belongs rather to the diary than the cash-book, they become something more than merely barren debits or credits. We read between the written lines, and the figures become for us eloquent. When John Varey, careful and painstaking man that he was, being anxious to give an accurate account to the minutest particular of the monies that came into, or went out of, his possession, made his entries in this journal of his—a

single item of a halfpenny being found not too insignificant for the record—he, doubtless, had no idea that the result would be subjected to a literary examination and audit when more than a century had elapsed. But so it has come about, and this bit of flotsam and jetsam caught in an eddy, and thence rescued from the tide which was bearing it down to destruction or oblivion, becomes interesting to us in ways speculative and suggestive.

One immediately attractive feature of the book is its local origin. It was written at Worsley, and we do not read far before discovering that the author was in the service of the great Duke of Bridgewater. Here at once is an interesting background for the central figure, whose outline it may afford us some recreation to shape from the recorded transactions, the small beer and other chronicles that go to make up his accounts. Like the life of man, John Varey's cash-book is rounded with a mystery—what preceded it or what followed after we know not. All that we know of the beginning and the end is that he makes his appearance upon the field of our mental vision with an entry to the effect that he "spent at John Mosse's 9d." and he makes his exit with the statement that he "paid B. Sothern for a gallon of rum 9s." and so disappears from our view.

It has already been said that he was in the service of the Duke of Bridgewater, an early entry being to the effect that on July 31st, 1780, he received of his Grace half-a-year's salary, amounting to £17 10s., due on the 29th May last. This item is suggestive, because it shows that John Varey's income from this source was a very modest one, and that the duke was not a punctual paymaster. It would be rash, however, to conclude that the amount of the salary was a reliable indication of the character or the value of the services rendered for it. As

we trace these payments we find that they are increased at intervals, until John Varey is in receipt of £60 per annum, paid in one sum, but it is noteworthy that there is always more or less delay in the settlement. All this is consistent with what we know of the canal-making duke. What he might require of John Varey for £60 per annum we can only guess, seeing that he never paid the great engineer, Brindley, more than one guinea per week, and from 1765 to 1772 he paid him nothing at all. We know that when Brindley, being in great straits for want of money during that barren period, appealed to his Grace of Bridgewater, for whom he had done such marvellous work, he was met with the answer, "I am much more distressed for money than you; however, as soon as I can recover myself, your services shall not go unrewarded." Unrewarded, however, they did go, for Brindley died before the duke found himself in a position to pay. The faithful but ill-used engineer had gone to his rest several years before John Varey made this first entry of salary in his book, and in the meantime the duke's finances had no doubt improved, otherwise a longer period than two months might have elapsed between the due date and the settlement. What was the exact nature of John Varey's duties, for which he received his thirty-five pounds per annum, is not quite clear. He may have been an under-steward, or have filled some similar position of trust. We find that—possibly for use in his occupation—he possesses himself of a case of drawing instruments, a parallel ruler, a square, and a Fenning's algebra. He moves about a good deal locally. There are frequent entries relating to expenses when engaged in selling beef for the duke at Dixon Green and other neighbouring places, and he is occasionally commissioned to take sums of money to Manchester, in evidence of which we find that he spent

sevenpence when "taking £75 to Mr. John Okell at Manchester on the duke's account." Again, we come upon this entry, "Expenses at Manchester when I took Esqr. Rasbottom's Esqr. Lowe's and Esqr. Lloyd's money on his Grace's account, one shilling." A more detailed statement relates to "Expenses in taking £600 to Mr. Tompkinson on his Grace's account." The expenditure on this occasion amounted to one shilling and a penny, and is thus particularised: "Turnpike to Manchester, 1d.; at Royal Oak with Mr. Tompkinson, 8d.; contingent expenses, 4d." In addition to this we find that he gives "to see the Irish giant in Manchester, 1s." It may be remarked here that probably this Mr. Tompkinson was the duke's solicitor, of whom mention is made in Smiles' "Life of Brindley."

But it is not so much regarding his relations with the duke that one gets up any interest in turning over the pages of John Varey's cash-book, for the references in that direction are vague and scanty. It is rather the man himself, his outward garb, his social relationships and surroundings, his pleasures and pursuits, as they are revealed to us in his simple ingenuous bookkeeping, that prove attractive to the extent of producing a feeling of friendly intimacy with him. The personality of an unknown author is always a matter of speculative curiosity to his readers. In John Varey's case he helps us unwittingly to a knowledge, and we get the impression of a man with a touch of quaint picturesqueness about him, a man withal who was as careful and precise in his exterior presentment as he was in his accounts. It would appear that after the fashion of his time he was a clean-shaven man, for we come upon payments for a razor, hone, razor-strop and shaving soap. He wore his hair powdered, there being frequent entries relating to the

purchase of that material, which cost him sometimes eightpence, and sometimes tenpence per pound, and we find too that he paid ninepence for a powder bag, and one shilling and sixpence for a puff. He used pomatum also, and he tied his hair with ribbons, an adornment with which he had frequently to supply himself, in lengths of two yards at a time, and at a cost of fourpence per yard. This use of ribbon, together with the purchase of a "tailed comb," would seem to show that he wore his hair long behind in a sort of queue. His coats were of various cloths and colours, maroon, drab, blue, and mulberry; his waistcoats are described as of silk and velveret, together with others of the Burdett kind, not to speak of virginal white vests, for which he seems to have had a fondness, providing himself on one occasion with no less than three, and at a cost of £1 5s. 6d. He was apparently particular as to the fineness of his linen, there being an entry relating to the purchase of three pieces of Irish cloth, a material for which in those days you might pay 1s. 9½d. per yard. He buys also cambric for shirt bosoms at the rate of 7s. 3d. per yard, and there is also an item for a small quantity of thick lawn for the same purpose at 8s. per yard. He wore knee breeches, which were of velveret or velveteen, kingscord, and satinet. In this connection garters for the knees and knee buckles are mentioned. Ordinarily he wore thread stockings, which cost him usually 3s. 0d. per pair, but there are also purchases of silk hose, for one pair of which he paid 12s. 9d. To complete his attire he wore shoes which cost him 6s. 6d. per pair, and an entry of 11d. for a pair of buckles would seem to show that they were added for adornment. John Varey, though he was a well-dressed man, yet possessed a frugal mind, and was economical in the purchase of his attire. He seems to have bought

many of the materials and then to have given them out to be made up, a lady sometimes performing the work of tailor for him. He buys drab cloth from a Huddersfield man, and stockings from a Kendal man. From a Scotchman he buys marking ink and a set of numbers. At Dirt Fair he buys quite a considerable quantity of cloth and flannel, and there are frequent entries of purchases of fents of velveret, which he sometimes got cut and dyed. These fents with others of satinet were made up into breeches. There are numerous entries for repairing clothes, and the breeches sometimes require re-seating, for which purpose we find in one entry that he has purchased half a yard of velveret. We note too that he paid "T. Kent 1s. 6d. for a fent to make three night caps."

Having got an impression of the outward form of John Varey, with his powdered, be-ribboned hair, his mulberry coat, white waistcoat, satinet breeches, and silk stockings, one is curious to know something about him more immediately personal, but in this direction the entries in his cash-book only provide material for speculation. How old he was, or whether he was a Lancashire man or not the chronicle sayeth not. His parents resided in Yorkshire, apparently at Pontefract, and it may be therefore that our friend was a Yorkshireman.

One of the earliest entries in his book is of a payment of one shilling for the carriage of a box containing a couple of fine shirts and a couple of night-shirts from Pontefract to Manchester. There are several references to journeys into Yorkshire to see the old people, for he appears to have been an affectionate and dutiful son, and on some of these visits he purchases a quantity of liquorice cake, a production for which Pontefract is famous. He has correspondence with home, too, and there are entries of various sums of threepence for

postage "paid for a letter from parents." Then there are frequent gifts of tea and tobacco to father and mother. Sometimes the tobacco seems to be given to mother alone, for we come upon "a pound of smoking tobacco for mother," as also "sent per Mr. Harrop for my mother, *viz.*, a pound of tea, 8s.; a pound of tobacco, 3s. 2d." The tea is sometimes Congo, and, on occasions, green hyson.

John Varey, though in the service of his Grace the Duke, was not of his household; but in the early part of the chronicle, and for a considerable period, appears as a resident in the house of Sarah Lansdale, to whom he pays for his board and lodging five shillings and sixpence per week, an amount afterwards increased to six shillings and sixpence, but never exceeding that sum. He pays Sarah Lansdale extra for mending his clothes, the amount of this in his quarterly settlement appearing in one instance to be ten shillings and sixpence. There are occasional items also of sixpence to Mary Wood for cleaning his shoes. He seems to have been very comfortable under Sarah Lansdale's care, and among his receipts and payments there are evidences of friendly commissions executed for her, such as the purchase of a Bible, for which three and sixpence was paid by John, and duly returned to him. John Varey's income from his noble master was, as we have seen, never very magnificent, but he was a man of resources, and had other means of earning money. Among these we find that he made out the poor account for the township of Worsley, for which clerkship the overseer paid him sums varying from five to twelve shillings. He also received commissions for the collection of moneys, and had transactions of various kinds, including the purchase and distribution of cheese and potatoes in tolerably large quantities. He was a very thrifty man withal, and in time could lend money, for which interest was paid to him

at the rate of five per cent per annum. There are also references to other sources of revenue, and profits from a little partnership arrangement. Like a prudent man, too, he became a member of the Worsley Sick Club, to which he paid the sum of two shillings and twopence quarterly.

Though eminently careful and saving, he appears to have taken his due pleasure in life. He liked to take his ease in his inn, and, if I mistake not, he was a very sociable and companionable man. The first item in his book, "Spent at John Mosse's, ninepence," is a keynote in his disposition in one direction. John Mosse was evidently an innkeeper, and his name occurs frequently in the early pages, as do also the names of many other innkeepers scattered over the chronicle. The sums spent, however, are always modest; a few pence it may be on most occasions, but all duly set down, together with the names of those with whom John was in company when the money was disbursed. Thus we have "Spent at Widow Baxter's, with T. Kent and J. Taylor, 7d.;" "Spent at Wm. Bowker's, when in company with B. Bullough, 6d.;" "Spent at Mr. Cheetham's, with John and Danl. Lancaster and company, 1s. 6d." Then there is an exceptional occasion upon which there was "spent at John Mosse's, with John and Thos. Varey and 3 Ladies, 2s." Sometimes the occasion is a special one—a christening, a wedding, or a funeral, the socially-disposed bachelor being in request at functions like those, so we find that he spent sixpence at John Mosse's at a christening, and at Jones's, on the occasion of Bowker's christening, one shilling. Then we have, "Spent at John Mosse's with David Hulton, at his wedding with Mary Tonge, 8d.;" "spent at Thos. Gee's wedding, 2s. 9d.;" "spent at J. Mosse's, at S. Rossington's wedding, 3s.;" "Spent at Hum. Gregory's wedding,

1s. 6d." Of the more serious ceremonials, we find that he spent threepence at Robert Lansdale's funeral, and an equal sum at Thos. Kent's wife's burial. The festive side of John Varey's nature is shown in his disposition to frequent wakes, and the like feasts and joyous gatherings. So we find that he spent at Eccles Wakes 1s. 6d. ; at Barton Wakes, 4d. ; and at Ellenbrook Wakes, 1s. 8d. He also goes to "Ellenbrook Rushburying," and spends there 1s. 4d. Among other quieter amusements he indulges in bowling, of which some of his records are that he "spent at 4 Lane Ends, in Hulton, at bowls, 9d. ;" and "spent at Price's, at bowling at twice, 4s." Against the latter extravagant expenditure must be put a less costly game at Price's which cost him 1½d. The love of sport leads him once a year to visit Kersal Moor Races. On one occasion only does he seem to have risked any money, and then he was unfortunate, the record running thus: "Spent at Kersal Moor Races, 8s. ; lost on Sir Row. Wynn's horse, 2s. 6d."

John Varey evidently loved a hand at cards, and in his frank and ingenuous manner he notes down his gains and losses, and the circumstances of the game. Sometimes this is played in Sarah Lansdale's pantry, sometimes in "my parlour," or at John Mosse's, and once we have a record of "won at cards in the servants' hall, 10½d.," which probably relates to the Duke's house. Only once is he tempted to play with dice, and then he loses 1s. 6d. There are records, too, of festive nights at home, as for instance, "Paid expenses at Sarah Lansdale's at a merry night, 6s. 6d. ;" or again, "Expenses at S. Lansdale's at a merry night, besides a bottle of rum, 3s., and a quantity of ale, 15s. 2d." On a date a little later than this of the merry night, there is an entry to the effect that he "paid James Massey for a sett of strings and a bridge, and repairing a violin which I borrowed of Mr. Tonge, 2s. 6d." Possibly the violin had

been brought into active service at the aforsaid merry-making. Then on the festive side of the account there is an item relating to "Two bottles of wine and expenses when Sally Atkinson, of Leeds, was at Worsley, 6s.;" and among other junkettings we find that he "Spent at Mosse's, being a dancing night, 3s.," and that he spent 4s. at a ball at Eccles. Sometimes he goes to the play at Manchester, one visit being recorded thus: "Play and expenses at Manchester, with S. and M. Tonge and company, 10s."

It should not be supposed, however, that John Varey was a man inordinately fond of amusements, or one who indulged in any excesses. The impression that one gets from his honest cash account is quite other than that. He was apparently a man of a very well regulated life, generous and charitable within the limits of his slender means. Such little pleasures as have been noted among his accounts are spread over a wide period, and there are equally clear evidences of his good-natured unselfishness. People came to him for small loans, and he gave little sums in relief to widows and people who happened accidents, colliers, and others. His gifts to his parents have been already noted, and once when on a visit to Yorkshire we find that he "gave to mother to buy sundries £2 2s." "Gave my godson, 5s." is another modest evidence of his good nature, and on one page we find "Transactions with sister Mary at Manchester,"

viz. :—

- A gun for nephew John, 10d.
- 2 walking sticks, one of which gave T. Bury, 1s. 8d.
- A pound of smokeing tobacco for parents, 2s. 10d.
- A Testament for Do., 3s.
- Sisters Ann and Mary each a calico gown, 14½yds., £1 11s. 6d.
- Shawls for Molly, Fanny, and Betty Tonge, 12s. 6d.
- (Towards this Molly Tonge sent my mother a silk hkf., value 4s. 6d.)
- Expences seeing the colledge, &c., 1s. 6d.

Then a little later we have: "Sent uncle Greenwood for sister Mary, £2 2s." There are other earlier gowns given to sisters Ann and Mary, and it is worthy of note that the cost of such material was then about 2s. 4d. per yard.

What more immediately interests us, however, in these chronicles is the fact that John Varey was a reading man. On the first page we find that he makes this entry relating to transactions in books:—

Dr. Goldsmith's poem of S. Bayley, 6d.  
Fenning's Algebra of W. Jones, 1s. 6d.  
A new Letter Writer of do., 1s.  
Pope's Essay on Man of T. Bury, 3d.  
Sold Wm. Jones the History of Argalas and Porthania, 9d.

Later he purchases "Sherlock on Death" for two shillings, and "Pope's Poems, Translations, and Miscellanies" for one shilling and sixpence. For two volumes of "Pliny's Epistles" he gave four shillings, and for two volumes of "Milton's Paradise Lost and Regained" he paid three shillings and one penny. One item is to the effect that he sold Will Greenwood "a sett of Bowen's Justice" for eighteen shillings, and there is a memorandum that "these books J. V. bought of D. Turner in 1778, price was 17s. 6d." so that he profited to the extent of sixpence by the transaction. He pays one shilling for four songs with notes thereto, and "for 24 duetts" three shillings, which would seem to show that John Varey had music in his soul. His indulgence in the fine arts is limited to the purchase of "4 cutts in fframes" for three shillings. One entry is interesting as an evidence of self education. It runs thus: "Paid Mr. Drake for binding a Booke for copying Mr. Byrom's shorthand in  $\frac{1}{2}$ -quire, ten pence."

His reading tastes are best displayed in his connection with a Book Club, which he probably did much to establish, for we find that in an early mention of it he has advanced

two guineas on account of it, and there are monthly subscriptions of one shilling and two pence regularly paid. Then there is a late entry of "Received in cash at the settling of the Book Club, nine shillings and ninepence, my books being short of the value of what advanced." Then he shares the cost of newspapers with two other friends, evidenced thus: "Paid Rd. Dobson my  $\frac{1}{3}$  part of newspapers to the 20th inst., one shilling and tenpence. The paper appears to have been "Wheeler's News." There are several transactions with Mr. Harrop for numbers of "The Rambler," for which he pays sixpence each. He also buys ten numbers of "Harrison's British Classicks," for which he pays five shillings. "A Pleasing Instructor," purchased for two shillings and elevenpence, he sends to sister Mary. He subscribes to a sick club and to more than one Sunday school, and regarding the latter there is this characteristic entry: "Paid John Royle my quarter's subscription to the Sunday school to this day, 2s. 6d." "Spent at the same time at S. Hilton's, 6d.

In going through John Varey's accounts we find many references to his little journeyings on His Grace's business or his own, but his movements are mainly of a local kind, never extending further than Liverpool, save when he pays his visits to Yorkshire. Sometimes he is on horseback and sometimes uses the coach, but very frequently we find him travelling by canal to Runcorn or Manchester, and he appears to be on friendly terms with one Captain Dobson, who is remembered by a New Year's gift of two shillings. The passage to Manchester cost sixpence, and the "Boat to and from Runcorn" is set down at four shillings and sixpence.

Through many pages of his book John Varey deals with his own affairs as a bachelor dwelling in the house of Sarah Lansdale, but on April 20, 1783, we find that he

spent at Middleton "With S. and M. Tonge the sum of five shillings and sixpence," and on December 13 of the same year there occurs this item: "Spent at Shawes with Matty Tonge 1s. 6d." and thereby hangs a tale. The name of Tonge crops up frequently in the book, for there seems to be a numerous family of that name, with Betty, and Molly, and Jane, and Matty amongst the womenkind, and they are associated in various ways with Middleton, where they probably resided. Middleton, I suspect, was to John Varey his sweetheart gate, and Matty certainly was the lady of his choice. In spirit, if not in words, therefore, it may be that John Varey communed with himself, as did Waugh's lover when he sighingly said:—

I wish that Michaelmas Day were past,  
 When wakin' time comes on ;  
 And I wish that Candlemas Day were here,  
 An' Matty an' me were one ;  
 I wish that this wanderin' wark were o'er,  
 This maunderin' to an' fro ;  
 That I could go whoam to my own true love,  
 An' stop at neet an' o'.

And so it came about as a consequence of his wooing that he had to settle up finally with good Sarah Lansdale. The record tells that the payment is on "Jany. 17th, the time I left and was married." But previous to that date we find that on New Year's Day he has "paid Mr. Olivant for a gold ring 7s. 10d." and also "for a pair of silver buckles 19s." to which latter entry is added the words, "gave them my Dr wife." Then between that date and the wedding he gets his hair cut and dressed, gives Captain Dobson his New Year's gift, receives his year's salary of £60 from His Grace of Bridgewater, and has a merry night at Thorpe's, which cost him two shillings and sixpence. On the 18th of January, 1784, we find these entries:—

Paid for licence to marry Martha Tonge (this day was married), £1 11s. 6d.

Expences at Eccles and Worsley when married, 14s. 6d.

Ringers, 5s.

Expences with Will Greenwood, 1s. 6d.

Subsequently there are payments for rum, wedding gloves, and other incidentals of the marriage feast. Matty has five guineas given to her to "buy sundries," and then little more than two months after the happy event comes the entry of "wine and physic for Matty when sick," which is an evil omen, for early in June following we find "Parson's dues, hearse, and expenses to Middleton, £1 7s. 6d.; coffin, £1 7s. 9d." And still later, "Paid Miles Taylor for cutting the inscription on my wife's gravestone, 5s. 3d." After this sad event there is a deepening seriousness about John Varey. He buys "Law's Spirit of Prayer" and "Hervey's Meditations." He pays Mr. Clarke for a "Pocket Bible" 4s. 6d., and for "A Week's Preparation and Companion to the Altar," 4s. 6d. On April 3, 1785, we read that he "spent at Manchester, on hearing Mr. Wesley preach there, 1s. 4d." On referring to John Wesley's journal, we find that being on his way to Ireland, he preached at Manchester on the date in question, which was Sunday. He tells how, on that occasion, the brethren flocked in from all parts so that the house could not contain them, and how it was supposed they had 1,200 communicants. Among John Varey's purchases of devotional books, we find that he paid Mr. Pawson, "a travelling Methodist preacher from Manchester," one shilling for a new edition of "J. Watts on Future State," and how he subscribed to the publication of the Rev. Mr. Fawell's octavo, entitled, "The Principles of Sound Policy Enforced." He paid John Murlin, "a travelling preacher," sixpence for his book of hymns, and he also paid a shilling for another selection. He pays his

subscriptions as duly to the Sunday Schools as to his sick club; he subscribes also to "a scheme for raising money to build a house"; he drinks his glass of rum, reads his newspaper and his devotional books, and in later days shows clearly that he has given serious thought to theological controversy, and has come under the influence of Swedenborgian views, which were then quite new in England. On one page we find the following purchases:—

Paid Mr. Clarke, stationer, viz. :—

- E. Swedenborg's Universal Theology, two vols., quarto, 14s.
- " Treatise on Heaven and Hell, 4s.
- " On the New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine, 4s.
- " On the Nature of Influx, 1s.
- " Treatise Concerning the Lord, 1s.
- Holy Bible, with Index and Concordance, 4mo., 23s. 6d.

After John Varey lost his wife, sister Mary is much in evidence, and after recording an amount of two shillings "spent at Flixton feast" with her, we come upon this, "spent at Manchester, seeing the Rev. Mr. Clowes, one shilling." It will be remembered that the Rev. John Clowes, Rector of St. John's Church, Manchester, was the introducer of Swedenborgianism to this country, and also a voluminous writer on that new doctrine, regarding which John Varey may have gone for enlightenment. Anyhow, we find that after this visit he pays Mr. Isaac Clarke one shilling and sixpence "for the Rev. Mr. Clowes's 'Summary view of Baron Swedenborg's Theological Work.'" This reverend and revered apostle of Swedenborg was just then exercising a great influence over the people, not only of his own church, but the inhabitants of surrounding villages. It is said of him by his biographer that "He used to ride in the morning to some manufacturing village . . . and as soon as his arrival was known at the factory where most of the members worked, the bell was rung; the people left work and collected in a

large room allowed for the purpose by the proprietors, glad as they were to welcome a minister whose hearers were the most orderly people in their employment. There, in the presence of young men and maidens, old men and children, as well as those in the vigour of life, their hard features softened and their cheeks wet with tears of tenderness and joy, all anxious to know the measure of their duty and to practise it, Mr. Clowes would hold forth in such animated strains that his own fine countenance seemed at last radiant with the light of heaven beaming from it." In some such way it may be that John Varey became attracted to the preacher, and so was led to visit him, an incident which reminds one how, sixteen years later, the youth, De Quincey, also visited the occupant of that quiet Vicarage of St. John's, and of the impression the Opium Eater has left to us in his "Reminiscences of the Rev. John Clowes." Among the last entries in John Varey's cash-book is one relating to the expenditure of "Eight pence for breakfast at J. Osbaldeston's, with the Rev. J. Clowes," and there in that worshipful company I would take leave of him, content to believe that under such influences he may have become, in due season, a child of the New Jerusalem.





## LANCASHIRE NOVELISTS: MISS LAHEE.\*

BY WILLIAM DINSMORE.

MISS LAHEE deserves a conspicuous place in the gallery of Lancashire novelists for her very able, successful, and sympathetic illustrations of Lancashire life and character. She has laboured ardently in the field of local literature for over half her lifetime, and the result of her never-flagging zeal and unwearied industry is most praiseworthy and very remarkable. In appraising Miss Lahee's clever contributions to Lancashire literature, this notable fact ought to be remembered, viz., she is not native here and to the manner born. There are many worthy natives of the County Palatine who believe that an alien cannot properly understand local idiom, or correctly illustrate it by voice or pen. Miss Lahee's dauntless temper of mind, accuracy of observation, quickness of comprehension, and nimble wit swept away this seemingly insuperable barrier to success in understanding the dialect and illustrating local character. She has attained the position of

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\* Author of "Owd Neddy Fitton's Visit to th' Earl o' Derby," "Acquitted though Guilty," "Traits and Sketches of Quaint Lancashire Folk," "Sybil West," etc., etc.

being one of the best writers in the Lancashire vernacular, with slender assistance from any one outside her own abode. On account of her sex and her modest retiring nature, Miss Lahee is debarred from moving round to nooks where Waugh, Brierley, and other famous Lancashire authors found originals of many of their characters. In perusing the works of some of the most celebrated masters of local dialect, it is evident that in the poor men's club houses, in village inns—where old cronies meet—

Fast by the ingle bleezin' finely,  
Wi' reemin swats, that drank divinely—

these writers found originals of many of their characters, which they afterwards portrayed with photographic exactness. Readers of Miss Lahee's skilfully constructed Lancashire sketches will look in vain for such a gem of character as that of the drunken sot maundering aloud to himself in a village beerhouse so inimitably portrayed by Edwin Waugh.

Although sketches of rollicking, drouthy, ingle cronies—so truthfully described by Ben Brierley and Edwin Waugh—do not figure in Miss Lahee's stories, her illustration of local character is lively, vigorous, racy of the soil, and rife with humour, not the humour of the professional jester or concert-hall comedian, but the homely native humour of the people.

Miss Lahee has a very remarkable command of local idiom, a keen insight and genuine knowledge of the domestic life and character of Lancashire working folk. She thoroughly appreciates their quaint ways, tenderness of heart, love of home, cleanly habits, inherent nobility, splendid courage, delight in nature and joy in music. She encountered these loveable people as friends, imbibed their ideas, and listened with delight to the charm of their

household words. She sounded the depths of their hearts, and she has a fond regard for the lowly estate of these honest toilers.

Lowliness is the base of every virtue ;  
Who goes the lowest, builds, doubt not, the safest.

Lowliness, and modesty, often has been made use of by cunning ambitious tricksters for their own selfish ends. Shakspere—the wizard of the world—declares the bitter truth, that—

Lowliness is young ambition's ladder,  
Whereto the climber-upward turns his face ;  
But when he once attains the upmost round,  
He unto the ladder turns his back,  
Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees  
By which he did ascend.

The first time Miss Lahee heard Waugh's "Come whoam to th' childer an' me" she was so impressed with the humour and pathos of this famous song that she determined to compose a poem in local dialect. When she intimated this resolution to her Rochdale friends, they maintained that, as she was not to the manner born, the chances of success as a dialect writer were against her. These prophets had reckoned without due knowledge of Miss Lahee's ability and resolution, and they appear to be unaware of the kinship of Keltic wit to Lancashire wit.

In spite of dismal prophesying, Miss Lahee courageously persisted in following her heart's desire to the top of its bent, and she vowed she would dedicate her abilities to the production of something in local literature specially acceptable to those who cherish a fond regard for homely ways and healthy, hearty simple life. Meantime she cultivated the garden of her mind and planted it with proper seed, which came to maturity in due season. In

studying local dialect she awoke to a new phase of literary life.

I consider that her sudden awakening to the charm and richness of Lancashire vernacular, and the success she obtained as a writer of local dialect, is very remarkable. Archdeacon Wilson, in his address at the unveiling of the Tim Bobbin monument at Rochdale, June 4th, 1892, said: "Miss Lahee is a perfect mistress of the dialect."

This folk-speech is related, by birth and parentage, to the splendid sister dialect spoken in Scotland. These sister dialects—although their way of life has fallen into the sere and yellow leaf—are charming and beautiful. They have the witchery of natural beauty. A good portion of their charm is owing to the admixture of the old, old tongue, full of poetic significance, which gave names to mountains, vales, woods, lakes, rivers, and all things in nature which delight the eye and gladden the heart of humanity in the British Islands.

The glamour of this most picturesque idiom threw a charm over her poetic nature, and her thoughts soon found articulation in the directness and artlessness of the homely speech of the humble classes of Lancashire.

Her enthusiasm for the vernacular of the County Palatine never wanes; it speaks to her at all times, in all places its voice is ever present. I have lived in Lancashire for more than half a century, and I have met many genuine lovers of this most delightful local dialect, but among all the lovers of the idiom not one can compare with Miss Lahee in heart-felt devotion for the vernacular; she is wedded to it for ever. I have seen her features light up with singular brightness when I have repeated to her even a few lines of Waugh's dialect poems. Sound but a few tones of his lyre to her, and behold, her lineaments shine

with beams of light astonishing to witness. Very pathetic to me is this expression, and I cannot find words to properly define this look of rapture evoked by a few notes of Edwin Waugh's brave, lovely, and tender melodies.

A few weeks ago I visited our talented authoress. I travelled by rail, and when the train started a young nun in the same carriage in which I journeyed produced her prayer-book and whispered certain prayers to herself. During the time she was engaged at her devotions, a hush fell upon the other passengers, a hush resembling the silence which comes over a congregation during the benediction which concludes a service of praise and prayer. While the nun prayed she seemed clothed with a spiritual grace, and the light of peace shone upon her features, but this light was faint and dim compared to that which shone on Miss Lahee's countenance while I repeated a few lines of Edwin Waugh's songs.

Miss Lahee has succeeded in writing up to the standard of Lancashire authors who were familiar with the dialect from their infancy, and trained to express their aspirations therein. She had attained to the state of womanhood before she began her studies in the vernacular. In portrayal of local life and character Miss Lahee is a worthy compeer of Waugh, Brierley, and other able writers who found a field for fancy in the lives of the willing toilers of their native county. In such themes—those simple unconventional lives—there is an inspiring power, for the well of human life is ever bubbling up, ever flowing, and the artist, the poet, and the novelist will always find, in the human spring, a supply of material ever fresh and suggestive. Miss Lahee has taken the colour of her surroundings with remarkable facility.

Her literary career is calm and uneventful, her mode of life simple and unassuming. She is superior to the

attractions of society, the show of wealth and station has no charm for her; she is content and happy in the company of her silent friends (her books), and solaced ever by her trusty Lancashire lass—fond and faithful companion, true as the best Sheffield steel and as well tempered; brave heart, “the desert were a paradise if thou wert there.” What is all the comfort of books to us? Of what avail is it, compared to the soul-sustaining living sympathy and kindly voices of true hearted friends? Their gentle voices are as soothing as the sound of Sabbath bells or the tender cooing of doves in a quiet valley. Ye friends beloved—

What are all our contrivings,  
And the wisdom of our books,  
When compared with your affection,  
And the gladness of your looks?

Ye are better than all the ballads  
That ever were sung or said!  
For ye are the living poems,  
And all the rest are dead!

Miss Lahee was born in Carlow, Ireland—country ever dear to her heart. There she spent the primrose time of her days.

In the year 1855 she settled in Rochdale, where she still lives, and where she first heard Edwin Waugh's dialect songs. These beautiful and original songs, brimful of poetic genius, wound their way quickly into the innermost recesses of her heart, where they found a lasting abiding place. While she listened to Waugh's admirers warble his ditties, she pondered on the beauty and vigour of the native Doric, and her quick ear soon caught the peculiar charm of the dialect.

The outcome of her study in the racy Lancashire vernacular was her very amusing and most successful sketch, “Owd Neddy Fitton's visit to th' Earl o' Derby.” This

product of her "prentice han'" deserves high praise as a truthful picture of country life and character. Humour and pathos in this brilliant sketch is admirably blended, and it has obtained a permanent place in local literature. It is one of the most delightful stories in dialect form. "Owd Neddy" was one of Waugh's prime favourites. He said to me, many years ago, "'Neddy Fitton' is the best story in the Lancashire dialect," and to the end of his days he highly esteemed this famous work. In return for Miss Lahee's cheery lines, composed in the vernacular, entitled "A New Year's Wish to Edwin Waugh, January 1st, 1890," which he received on the last New Year's Day his mortal eyes beheld, the aged poet—worn with suffering, yet cheerful still, and his face beaming with the light of dauntless courage, ready, aye ready to encounter the enemy of all mortality then hovering round the bard's loved home; his happy home, always neat and clean, wherein he was so carefully tended by loving hands, watched ever by the faithful and patient-hearted one—sent her his counterfeit presentment, along with a letter thanking her very heartily for "the genial kindness of your New Year's greeting in good, homely verse. It did me good to read it. I have known you by repute for a long time. I read your 'Neddy Fitton' with surprise and delight when it first came out; and it comes with the fresh genuine ring of nature's mintage to me still." "Owd Neddy" is a worthy colleague of Waugh's "Besom Ben" and Brierley's "Ab o' th' Yate," "three blither hearts ye wad na find in Christendie."

The *Rochdale Observer*, September 6, 1893, in commenting on the death of a member of the Fitton clan, also gives a few interesting particulars respecting Owd Neddy and his neighbours, as follows:—"Mr. Richard Fitton, who died at Welby Farm, Top-o'-th'-Hill, Wal-

mersley, on Friday, was a fine specimen of the old English farmer, and was well known throughout the district. He was one of the Fittons of Birtle, a numerous family to which Edwin Waugh refers when in the 'Grave of Grislehurst Boggart' he makes an old woman say 'Oh, we'n plenty o' neighbours; but th' Birtle folk are a deeol on um sib an' sib, rib an' rib—o' ov a litter—Fittons an' Diggles, an' Fittons an' Diggles o'er again.' James Fitton, the father of deceased, was cousin to Edward Fitton of Moorgate Farm, Grislehurst, the hero of Miss Lahee's Lancashire sketch, 'Owd Neddy Fitton's visit to th' Earl o' Derby,' a work which the *Bury Times* speaks of as 'the most popular local work ever published.' It has run into the 29th edition. In this sketch Neddy Fitton is made to say that 'This farm ut aw neaw houd wur in er family abeaut two or three hundert yer; aye, or more nor that, for th' owd Earl gan a leeas on it to my greyt-greyt gronfeyther, for savin' his life at th' big feight, at Wigan, between th' King's troops un th' people, at th' time o' Crumwell, aw think it wur.' After his father died the lease ran out, and Mr. Tarrey, the Earl's agent in this district, declined to renew the lease except at a largely increased rental 'un a hundert peawnd as a foine deawn upo' th' nail.' However, subsequently, Mr. Tarrey declined to take the money, and gave Neddy notice to quit, as he wanted the farm for a friend of his. Neddy at once set out for the Earl's residence. The Earl, delighted with the farmer's quaint address and frankness of manner, made him his guest for a day or two, and invited him to dinner, and eventually renewed the lease at the original rent, saying, 'You and your family are to keep it as long as you can pay the said rent, without fines or any other extra charges for renewal of lease.' Owd Neddy returned with a £20 note as a present from Lady

Derby to his wife, Nan, and a £5 note for himself with which to drink the Earl's health."

I quote Neddy's song wherein he describes himself and his belongings :—

My name's Neddy Fitton ; aw live yon' at Birtle ;  
 Aw'm a gradely hard-wortchin honest owd mon ;  
 Aw never get drunk, nor fo' eawt wi' mi' neighbours ;  
 But hoo's olez best pleast when aw'm awhoam, is er Nan.

An' as for th' farm, by th' mass, yo shud see it ;  
 Th' posies so bloomin', th' meadows so green ;  
 An' aw raily believe ut theer's noan sich another  
 Owd place, like, for beauty o' th' earth to be seen.

Then th' heawse, it fair shines, cose er Nan's olez clennin,  
 For wark is no trouble to her—it's a play ;  
 An' Andrew, my lad, yon, aw'll mak him a lawyer  
 Or vicar ; but, dang it, he'd ne'er shap to pray.

Neaw, o' ut aw want is a new lease o' th' farm,  
 Ut Tarrey'd tak fro' me, aw know, iv he dar,  
 Th' lease ut wur gan to owd Andrew Fitton,  
 For savin' Earl James i' that dall'd Crummell war.

Miss Lahee delights in literary effort, she finds pleasure in composition, and the enjoyment derived keeps her heart buoyant. She enjoys all that is lovely in Nature—with the freshness of youthful ardour—especially the flowers with their heavenly perfume, the song of birds, the music of the wind and waters, and the glorious pageantry of the sky. She never tires of listening to Nature's story. The dear old familiar tale has to her a lasting wondrous charm. Although the current of her life has flowed along peacefully, unstained by the margin's dust, her heart responds to the sorrows of others, and she knows how sublime a thing it is to suffer and be strong. Of this sublimity of suffering she was an eye-witness in the days of the terrible cotton famine in Lancashire, and at the time of the terrible famine in Ireland, where she witnessed so

many horrible scenes, that even now, when she thinks of those dreadful events, her heart is filled with pain. She condemns cruelty and selfishness. She has deep reverence for—

All powers and virtues that enoble men—  
The heroes' courage and the martyrs' truth,  
The saints' white purity, the prophets' ken,  
The high unworldliness of ardent youth,  
The poets' rapture, the apostles' ruth.

Although she has had crosses and losses—every one of woman born is a mark for the arrows of misfortune—yet her trust in the Great Father's absolute love never wavers. That virtue is its own reward, she firmly believes, and her own life, modest, retiring, and studious, is an example of gentleness and virtue. The sights and sounds in Nature, diffused over heaven and earth, speak to her in a spiritual language, unfolding solemn teaching and tidings of things invisible to superficial observers. The direct bearing upon daily life contained in the most beautiful sentence in all literature: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,” is realised by her in a deep, spiritual, imaginative manner.

She believes, as Shelley believed, that: “Whosoever is free from the contamination of luxury and licence, may go forth to the fields and woods, inhaling joyous renovation from the breath of spring, or catching from the odour and sounds of autumn some diviner mood of sweetest sadness, which improves the softened heart; whosoever is no deceiver or destroyer of his fellow-men—no liar, no flatterer, no murderer—may walk among his species, deriving from the communion with all which they contain of beautiful or of majestic, some intercourse with the universal God. Whosoever has maintained with his own heart the strictest correspondence of confidence, who dares

to examine and to estimate every imagination which suggests itself to his mind, whosoever is that which he designs to become, and only aspires to that which the divinity of his own nature shall consider and approve—he has already seen God."

There is a strong democratic bias in her nature, and in her vigorous, highly interesting, and instructive "Life and Times of the late Alderman Livesey, of Rochdale," her political inclination is manifested. She deserves the sympathy of the Liberal party.

Encouraged by the great success of her felicitous sketch, "Owd Neddy Fitton," which at once established her literary reputation, and has now reached the thirty-third edition, Miss Lahee published a series of cleverly constructed humorous sketches given in the genuine Doric. These were well received, and many editions were issued. She also produced several larger works, which appeared in the local press, and were widely circulated and highly appreciated. Some of these excellent novels were issued in book form and passed through many editions. Her latest book is a Lancashire story entitled "Sybil West." In this novel the every-day life of our factory operatives is illustrated—with rare fidelity—in a series of incidents connected with the career of the heroine, a mill girl. This work abounds in picturesque descriptions of homely manners, told with the humour and pathos of the Lancashire dialect, of which Miss Lahee has such a remarkable gift.

This vividly written work has received the hearty approval of competent critics on the staff of the leading newspapers in Manchester, Rochdale, Oldham, and Bury. The following criticism of "Sybil West" appeared in the *Review of Reviews* :—"Miss Lahee has drawn a manifestly faithful picture of Lancashire life to-day. There is 'real grit' in the men and women of the North, and we are

made to feel it here. The purity and strength of the women is the chief theme, and without any sensationalism of plot there is enough character, humour, and quiet interest in the book to make it very pleasant reading. It is a book good in itself and sure to be good in its results. We want more such, and more characters like Martha West."

Miss Lahee possesses the faculty of imagining the workings of natures whose lives and circumstances are foreign to her own. Her instincts and intuitions enable her to understand their actions and thoughts. To those who love and admire her—those favoured few who know her genuine worth—this gift of penetration is a source of never-ending wonderment.

The following examples of Miss Lahee's dialect verse, to a certain extent, indicate her facility in rendering local idiom. The jollity of the season of good-will and merriment, the delight of rustic courtship, the pleasure of matrimony, and the joy of paternity are admirably expressed in the following poem:—

JONE TODD'S RECOLLECTIONS O' KESMAS.

Aw'll tell yo' what it is, good folk,  
 Aw like this blithesome time,  
 As weel as when aw crack'd mo joke  
 I' monhood's early prime.  
 Aw'm gett'n owerder neaw, bi' th' mass,  
 An' Mally's yed is grey,  
 But, then, what mattern that? Th'owd lass  
 An' me, we'en had eawr day.

Ay, ay, an' happy days they wurn,  
 Aw recollect 'em still,  
 An' oft bethink me o' that morn  
 We met near Rooley Hill.  
 Hoo stood beside a holly bush,  
 Her een wur sparklin' breet,  
 Her cheeks would put a rose to th' blush,  
 Had ony bin i' seest.

Ay, theer hoo stood, I see her now,  
 A pictur' fair to please ;  
 Her apron full o' holly bough,  
 An' other bits o' trees,  
 Which were to mak' a garland gay,  
 To hang up i' their kitchen.

"Thae knows to-morn is Kesmas Day,  
 Hoo sed, wi' smile bewitchin'.

"Twor then aw ax'd her to be mine,  
 Aw ne'er pluck'd up afore,  
 Becouse hoo oler look'd so fine,  
 An' aw wur nobbut poor.  
 It's true, I had a bonny cot,  
 An' smithy o' mi' own,  
 An' just as nice a garden plot  
 As ever honds had sown.

Aw'd fairly liked her mony a year,  
 An' that hoo reet weel knew,  
 For o' hoo tossed her yed some queer  
 An' sed, "What, marry you ?  
 Nay, nay, aw've better i' mi chance  
 Beside, wheer's Martha Street ?  
 Aw seed thee clippin' her i' th' dance  
 At Caleb's yester-neet."

"Eh ! never name her, wench," aw sed,  
 "Hoo's nowt at o' to me,  
 Shuz who aw clip, it's thee aw'st wed,  
 Providin' thae'll agree.  
 So will ta ha' me, yigh or no ?  
 Aw like a gradely tale,  
 Aw'st ha' one too, or else, by go,  
 Aw'll co an auction sale."

Wi' that, embowden'd by her look,  
 Afore hoo whispered, "Yes,"  
 Her tremblin' hond i' mine aw took,  
 An' stole a Kesmas kiss.  
 An' ever sin', aw've liked that day,  
 A lucky day, yo' see,  
 For t' wife an' me han pood one way  
 I' peace and unity.

Beside, God's blest us both wi' health  
 An' strength to plod eawr road,  
 Aw envy noather pomp nor wealth,  
 Nor ony hee abode.

We'en two fine lads coed Jone an' George,  
 No better sons need be,  
 They wortch like niggers at eawr forge,  
 An' seldom disagree.

We'en saved a bit o' brass, no fear,  
 Aw owe no mon a cent,  
 While Mally's left mi' heart to cheer,  
 Aw'st olez feel content.  
 So let us keep this season up,  
 We han no costly wine,  
 But we con share eawr social cup  
 For th' sake o' Auld Lang Syne.

Miss Lahee's didactic manner reminds me of honest Samuel Laycock's mood when he took to sermonising. The following poem contains quaint samples of homely wisdom :—

## GARDENER NED'S PHILOSOPHY.

One summer's eve I sat me down  
 Outside a rural cottage door,  
 To watch the sun with halo crown  
 Skim o'er the heights of Rooley Moor.  
  
 A tinkling brooklet flowed along  
 The bosom of the valley green ;  
 The feathered choir in tuneful song,  
 Lent an enchantment to the scene.  
  
 The heather brown lay at my feet,  
 Touched by bright nature's dewy hand ;  
 And blooming near were violets sweet,  
 The gillyflower and fairy wand.  
  
 Above my head the hawthorn flung  
 Its odorous perfume on the air ;  
 The graceful fuchsias clust'ring hung  
 In variegated beauty there.  
  
 Close to me loitered gardener Ned,  
 A studious, quaint, eccentric man ;  
 Whose wealth lay in his garden bed,  
 His hoe, rake, spade, and watering can.  
  
 " Aw like my garden weel," said he,  
 " An' posies, sich a pratty seet,  
 They're o'most everything to me,  
 Aw tend 'em welly day and neet.

"Aw sell a tuthrey neaw an' then,  
 To folk who chance to wander past ;  
 Fresh buds come peepin' eawt agen,  
 An' oppun into blossom fast.

"As Spring steers reawnd aw sow my seeds  
 But find some wark to keep 'em clear  
 Fro' mother Natur's eawt-cast weeds,  
 Which grow so ronksome everywheer.

"To me a garden's like this earth,  
 There's o' soarts scattered o'er its face  
 Some seeds are valued for their worth,  
 Some act as poison to their race.

"So we mun nobbut pick an' choose,  
 The best an' sweetest while we con,  
 An' weed fro' them the rank refuse,  
 As sin should be raked eawt fro' mon.

"Just watch yon bee wi' busy wing,  
 He's olez thro' mi fleaw'r beds comin' ;  
 Get off fro' theer, thaet teastil thing,  
 Thaer's but a thief for o' thi hummin'.

"An' neaw here comes another mak'  
 O' cunnin' robber dancin' by,  
 Wi' peckled wings and yellow back,  
 That grub what's coed a butterfly.

"'Ways wi' thee, flauntin' gawdy nowt,  
 Mi polyants want noan o' thee ;  
 Aw've quite enough to do, aw doubt,  
 Wi' yonder thiev'n' humma-bee.

"Off wi' thee, painted worm o'th' earth !  
 Thae favours t' most a vainsome fop,  
 Those callous chaps o' reptile birth,  
 Who oft destroy a fruitful crop.

"Like thee, they're dizent eawt some gay,  
 An' chet good grain, shuz who's their miller,  
 They're like thee most i' every way,  
 Thae nasty donn'd-up caterpiller.

"Aw fairly hate a useless mite,  
 Aw'd leifer ha' yon bee, bi' th' mass,  
 For makin' honey's his delight,  
 But thaet maez nother grist nor brass."

In Miss Lahee's unique poem, "The Local Preytcher's Prayer," the lover of local dialect will find a singular blending of quaint humour, pathos, and characteristic appeals to the Supreme Being, told in racy vernacular.

## THE LOCAL PREYTCHER'S PRAYER.

There's few aw deawt areawnd abeawt,  
 But know a place cood Shay,  
 Where once there lived a good owd chap  
 Named Daniel Holliday.  
 He kept a soart o' general shop,  
 Sowd sugar, brade, an' tay ;  
 He wur a local preytcher too,  
 An' clever in his way  
 He used to teych eawr Sunday Schoo',  
 An' would allow no schism,  
 But tried some hard to poo' us thro'  
 Eawr creed an' catechism.  
 A meetly honest chap wur Dan,  
 Wi' yure as white as snow ;  
 A betthur or more upreet mon  
 Yo' never need to know.  
 I see him neaw fair i' my mind,  
 Just as he used to be ;  
 A pleasant spoken mon an' kind—  
 Kind in his charity.  
 For o' his words wurn quaint an' quare,  
 He allus preytch'd folk th' truth,  
 An' often th' burden of his prayer  
 Wur "Lord, convert eawr youth.  
 " Mak' o' eawr lads good, sober men,  
 Preserve eawr wenches, too,  
 Fro' folderdals an things that's vain,  
 No mon should wed a foo' !  
 A wise an' thrifty virtuous wife  
 Is far aboon a creawn ;  
 For hoo's the solace o' mon's life,  
 His treasure I'll be beawn'.  
 " Good Lord, do help desarvin' folk,  
 Thoose self-reliant mak'  
 That wortch until like steam they smoke,  
 Some pity on 'em tak'.  
 They peyl away fro' morn till neet,  
 Their motto's draw an' pay ;  
 Oh, may their women trate 'em reet,  
 Nor throw their brass away.  
 " An' Lord reclaim the drunkard, do,  
 The loose an' reckless sot ;  
 The slothful an' the slaggard, too,  
 Whom wealth of time knows not.

They're welly allus poor an' ragg'd,  
 They mostly dee i' sin ;  
 But when the devil gets 'em bagg'd  
 He allus tak's 'em in.

"The 'Scotchmen,' Lord, yo' murn't forget—  
 The tallymen, I mean—  
 Who seek cawr women folk to chet  
 Wi' fancy gooda an' plain.  
 Not sayin' but there met be wurr,  
 They nobbut chet and schame,  
 But Lord, yo' known the backbiter  
 Will rob a mon's good name.

"I wonder who it is that's free  
 Fro' blots to yer 'em tell ;  
 Bi' th' mass, that fiend coed Calumny  
 Should be shut up i' hell,  
 An' never lett'n loose, good Lord,  
 Upon a Christian nation,  
 To murder by a look or word  
 A goodly reputation.

"The lawyers' conscience prick, good Lord,  
 They nip like summer fleyk  
 An' charge us six-an'-eightpence  
 If tuthrey words they speyk ;  
 An' if they known we'n gettin aught  
 In heawses or in londs,  
 They'll find a flaw to leave us nought  
 Except what's in their honds.

"I know 'em weel, I warrant you,  
 For I've just had my share  
 Of schedule one an' schedule two,  
 On pappur eight-inch square ;  
 They'll act'ly stare yo' straight i' th' face,  
 An' chet yo' o' th' same ;  
 I think they're some o' Ishmael's race,  
 Ther's no convartin' thaem.

"Give comfort to the sick, good Lord,  
 An' to the weary, rest ;  
 Give brass to them that will afford  
 To succour thoose distrest.  
 Reclaim the lost, greyt Master,  
 There's theawsands to be feawnd ;  
 On marcy let 'em pastur'  
 An' in Thy Grace abeaund.

"Amen."



“Dulce est desipere in loco.”—*Horace.*

[*The following Essay in Descriptive Poesy is printed at the request of the Manchester Literary Club, before which learned society the author had the honour of reading it. He is not without hopes that its publication may assist the Prime Minister in his disposal of the Poet Laureate's crown.*]

## THIRLMERE WATER.

BY CORNELIUS HORATIO FLACCUS, M.A.

“In me Phœbus irruit ac miranda fatur.”—*Walter Mapes.*

THE true theory of Descriptive Poesy is, unfortunately, neglected by most of our poets, though Mr. Whitman has done much to advance its claims. The formula applied by Wagner to the sister art of Music is undoubtedly the true one, and furnishes us with a suitable example. From him we may learn that mere melody is not sufficient, and that monotonously recurring cadences of rhymes can never satisfactorily express the images presented to the mind's eye.

As Pope happily says—

When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,  
The line too labours and the words move slow.

Similarly I contend that it is absurd to use the same rhythm to describe successively a palace and a pig-stye, a king and a compound householder, a revolution and a row. The greatest art is shown in discrimination, and the poet should, as far as possible, rise and fall, contract and expand, halt and run, to suit the particular theme of his muse whose feet, however beautiful, he is bound remorselessly to fetter—nay, to cut off, if the occasion requires it.

This view, however, not having, *as yet*, attained general acceptance, I submit, with all due modesty, my essay in descriptive poesy:—

THIRLMERE.

Water of Thirlmere!

• • • • •  
How came you here?

[The long pause is meant to express the great length of piping from Thirlmere.]

Soft as the dew of heaven,  
Pure as its ray,  
Placidly slumbering  
Thorold's lake lay.

Wavelets tripped rippling  
Over its bed—  
Rustics sat tippling  
At the "Nag's Head."

[There is nothing really discordant in this allusion. The "Nag's Head" is intimately associated with the lake and cannot be ignored. The mention of it accounts for the dithyrambics which follow.]

## THE NAG'S HEAD.

Wake! wake! my muse! now strike thy lyre,  
 With joyous shout the welkin burst;  
 Sing of the parchèd throat's desire,  
 The blessing of a heavenly thirst!

Then, sing the joy that crowns the cup,  
 Sing, while in chorus glasses clink,  
 Sing what it is to sit and sup,  
 Sing loud and high the praise of drink.

Wild asses, saith the Psalmist,\* slake  
 Their thirst from rills that fill the mere;  
 Let those who will drink from the lake,  
 But here's the "Nag's Head"—give me beer!  
 Selah! †

## THE NEIGHBOURHOOD.

All around are undulations;  
 All about are hills and valleys,  
 Hoary woods and trim plantations,  
 Ferny glens and bosky alleys.

Amongst the hills and dales lie scatter'd farms,  
 Peaceful, secure, and free from war's alarms  
 Or vexed affairs of state.

\* Psalm 104, v. 11. "All beasts of the field drink thereof, and the wild asses quench their thirst."

† "Selah!" I use this Hebrew word not without diffidence, deferring to the superior judgment of those who know better than myself. By some commentators it is supposed to signify "silence"—a break in the song; or, as it were, a change of barrel in the organ. It is, however, by the learned Rabelais translated "Let's drink"—an interval for refreshments—and that is the sense in which I use it

There Mollies, conscious of their charms,  
Run out to meet th' expectant arms  
Of Johnnies at the gate.

[No description of a farm would be complete without this pleasing feature.]

## THE FELLS.

Upon the gazing eye how dwells and swells  
In awful intensity  
The bulky immensity,  
Rugged and bare and broad and far and wide,  
In elongation vast on every side,  
The Fells !

## HELVELLYN.

Uprises great Helvellyn, huge and high,  
His giant shoulders lifting to the sky,  
Now shows triumphant o'er the envious clouds—  
Now in mysterious mist\* his head enshrouds !

## THE LAKE.

See, in the hollow there how lies the lake,  
As maiden charmed to sleep, for whose fair sake—  
Lest base intruders come with touch profane—  
Two tow'ring crags stand guard—alas, in vain !  
“Thorold! awake now! Rouse thee and appear!  
Say how Mancunium robbed thee of thy mere.”

[Note.—Thorold is called *thrice*. Having been so long dead he needs much awakening. It will perhaps be objected that this question would, with more reason, be directed to Sir John Harwood than to a person who (if he ever existed) died many centuries ago, and certainly knew nothing about the Waterworks. But as Sir John, if

\* “Mysterious mist”—very original, I flatter myself.

questioned, would probably not have replied in due poetical form, it is manifestly preferable to address Thorold—more especially as the poet can put whatever words he likes into his mouth. Thorold speaks in blank verse as most appropriately commonplace—a remembrance of “Paradise Lost” also influences the poet, who dreads not invidious comparison.]

*THOROLD loquitur.*

“ Mancunium, that great city, long had drawn  
 From Woodhead and its moors a full supply  
 Of excellent pipe-water as was need  
 To quench the thirst of citizens, or wash their clothes,  
 Or seemly flush their sewers—better yet,  
 Sufficient was there left to sell to him  
 Who wanted more, and meter-rents would pay—  
 E'en neighbouring towns were customers at will,  
 And all rejoiced in Woodhead's reservoirs.  
 But—whispered first, then uttered loud and strong—  
 Came dark forebodings of a future day  
 Of direful drought, when men would have to eke  
 Their water out with whiskey, and perchance  
 E'en seek the grave to find a bitter beer.  
 Then cast about the citizens that they might find  
 New sources of supply—in Council met  
 The Aldermen and Councillors, grave and wise,  
 When one of prescience clear arose and said,  
 With wonted courteous preface, ‘ Mr. Mayor,  
 It seems to me as clear as clear can be  
 But one resource we have and that as plain  
 As is the nose upon your Worship's face—  
 To Thirlmere we must go! ’ Forth, straight, at once  
 Resounded plaudits echoing long, which showed  
 Unanimously thus the general thought.

Full soon a Bill was drafted, and in course of time  
 Commissioners appointed to inquire  
 Into the matter, and then make report.  
 At last the Bill receiving Royal sanction,  
 Became an Act, and Thirlmere ! Wo is me !  
 A Reservoir henceforth for Waterworks ! ”  
 Thus ended Thorold, and from out his eyes  
 The hidden springs gushed forth impetuous  
 With such profusion—for so long a time—  
 That, sooth to say, I feared another flood,  
 And shortly cried, “Dry up, old man ! dry up ! ”  
 The which he did.

## THE INVASION OF THE NAVVY.

[For such a theme as the Invasion of the Navvy, Walt Whitman would seem pre-eminently the best model.]

Sing now of the Work ! the beginning of the Work !  
 The Invasion of the Navvy—hundreds of Navvies—  
 thousands of Navvies ;  
 The Navvy, mighty to perform, to transform, to reform ;  
 The Navvy with his spade, his pick, his wheelbarrow ;  
 the Navvy with his lever moving the world ;  
 The Navvy with his brawny arms and legs and his hairy  
 chest ;  
 The Navvy sweating at his toil ;  
 The Navvy on Saturday night at the “ Nag’s Head,” with  
 his pipe and its black shag, with his pots of beer—  
 many of them ;  
 The Navvy smoking, spitting, drinking, cursing, singing,  
 kicking, fighting ;  
 The big fight—the bloody noses.  
 Oh, Navvy ! horny-handed son of toil, my flesh and blood,  
 my brother, I love thee !

The many-headed multitude of workers—  
 The masons, the bricksetters, the gangers, the clerk of the  
 works, the great boss engineer himself!  
 Sing of the workmen,  
 Sing of the work,  
 The dam, the big dam, the water-strainer, the aqueduct,  
 the miles upon miles of piping,  
 The cut and cover, the dirt, the dirt shifted.  
 The work completed, the plant sold, the workmen  
 dispersed.

## DUNMAIL.

[It is absolutely impossible to avoid introducing the spirit of Dunmail, which indeed, thrusts itself forward.]

From Dunmail Raise old Dunmail rose  
 And donned his mail of gold ;  
 "Now, who are these base slaves," he cried,  
 "That dare to make so bold  
 As ravage thus my kingdom—thus  
 My territory hold !

"Rouse ! rouse my warriors ! let your swords  
 Mine ancient realm regain."  
 Then slowly rose old Donald : "Sire,  
 I counsel 'tis in vain  
 To kick against these pricks of time.  
 Best go to sleep again."

The monarch sighed, " You may be right,  
 I put it thus : 'you *may* ;'  
 Though on occasions such as this  
 Ghosts always have a say.  
 But, perhaps, it doesn't matter much,"  
 So muttering, down he lay.

## THE CORPORATION VISIT TO THIRLMERE.

[Having to treat of a Corporation trip, the verse moves trippingly, adopting a well-known historic form.]

'Twas finished long, but not before  
 October nineteenth, ninety-four,  
 Was opened that enormous bore—  
 The Thirlmere Aqueduct, Sir.  
 Then, as the Council did ordain,  
 (Of which some paltry folk complain)  
 A party in a special train  
 Sir John did there conduct, Sir.  
 Arrivèd there in great parade,  
 Appropriate speeches being made,  
 Sir John turns on the tap, Sir,  
 And forth th' imprison'd water dashed,  
 And as it rushed and flushed and flashed,  
 The standers-by did clap, Sir.

Lunch followed—that of course—then special train  
 Conveyed th' illustrious party home again  
 To their domestic hearths, and, briefly said,  
 'Ere morning broke they all were safe in bed.  
 Not so the water—which, tho' hurrying fast,  
 Arrived not here till two-score hours were past,  
 For which event the Council did prepare  
 A due solemnity in Albert Square.

[Coming now to the great and final demonstration of civic joy, we have first the ringing of the Town Hall Bells, then the full pomp of the Inaugural Ceremony, accompanied by the music of the Police Band. Some attempt is made to give a musical effect to this—strictly speaking, it should be sung. The irregularity of the metre towards the end is quite intentional, and only such as is demanded by the subject. The poem closes simply and naturally.]

## THE INAUGURATION IN ALBERT SQUARE.

Now let the merry joy-bells ring  
 With ding a dong and dong a ding,  
 As in the square  
 We hail the Mayor,  
 And the worthy Corporation,  
 Who from a distant spot have brought  
 Great quantity of purest wat-  
 -Er which we want,  
 An endless font  
 Of civic jubilation.

The crowd are dumb—all standing mum,  
 While there are some are growing numb.  
 But soon a hum proclaims “They come,”  
 And “bum! bum! bum!” resounds the drum,  
 “Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay!” (*ad quantum suff.*)

In martial rank and file appear,  
 His Lordship’s way to pioneer,  
 Policemen looking so severe,  
 You’d think they never tasted beer,  
 “Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay!”

The drums are beat, the trumpets blare,  
 Now the procession’s in the square.  
 The people push, and crush and stare,  
 To see his Lordship the Lord Mayor,  
 “Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay!”

The trumpets blare, the drums are beat,  
 His Lordship the Lord Mayor to greet,  
 The Right Honourable Gentleman’s cortège marches  
 with irregular feet,

But so many Mayors in chains, Aldermen, Councillors,  
and other distinguished personages are not often  
seen in one street!

“Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay!”

A temporary fountain having been previously erected,  
after some speaking, Sir John with a golden key  
Did set the locked up Thirlmere water free,  
Which, rushing out, spouted high—then falling, dis-  
persedly splashed the spectators, and continues so  
to spout and splash, as you may see.  
Now, ye Muses, give my halting Pegasus a feed of corn,  
for happily ended is my Epopée.  
“Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay!”

A needless Alexandrine ends the song,  
Which, like the Thirlmere pipe, you'll say, is very  
long.



